



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER, KENT A. LEONHARDT



ANNUAL

— 2024

PUBLISHED
JANUARY 2025

REPORT

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

WVDA

CONTACTS

1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
State Capitol, Room E-28
Charleston, WV 25305-0170

KENT A. LEONHARDT

COMMISSIONER

kleonhardt@wvda.us or 304-558-3550

JOSEPH L. HATTON

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

jhatton@wvda.us or 304-558-3550

NORMAN BAILEY

CHIEF OF STAFF

nbailey@wvda.us or 304-558-3200

AMIE MINOR

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

aminor@wvda.us or 304-558-3200

LORA WALKER, ESQ.

GENERAL COUNSEL

lwalker@wvda.us or 304-558-1350

BETH SOUTHERN

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

bsouthern@wvda.us or 304-558-3708



NO FARM NO FOOD



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.

Kent A. Leschardt

Table of CONTENTS

4 CONTACT US

6 COMMISSIONER HIGHLIGHTS & INITIATIVES

Guthrie Labs
West Virginia Grown
West Virginia Apple Recovery

8 ANIMAL HEALTH

Meat and Poultry Inspection
Captive Cervid/Deer Farming
Animal Disease Traceability (ADT)
Animal Health Field Technicians (AHFTS)
Livestock Grading/USDA Agriculture - Marketing Service (AMS)
Apiary Unit
Poultry
Swine
WV One Health Initiatives
Veterinary Biologics Requests
WV Spay & Neuter Program
State Veterinarian Office

14 FARMS

Huttonsville, Pruntytown and Lakin Farms
General McCausland Memorial Farm
West Virginia University and -
West Virginia State University

16 CEDAR LAKES CONFERENCE CENTER

Cedar Lakes Conference Center

18 EMERGENCY RESPONSE READINESS

Homeland Security Unit (HSU)

20 FOOD SAFETY

United States Food and Drug Administration
U.S. Department of Agriculture - Country of Origin Labeling
Food and Dairy Testing
Summer Lunches
Farmers Markets
Eggs
Produce Safety
Manufactured Foods Regulatory - Program Standards
Select Plant-Based Derivative Products (Hemp and Kratom Products)

23 AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY PROTECTION

United States Food and Drug - Administration
West Virginia Commercial Feed Law
Fertilizer
Lime
Seed
Animal Feed Regulatory Program - Standards
Pesticides Control Act

26 LABORATORIES

Agriculture Materials
Food and Dairy Testing
Hemp
Cooperative Agreements
ISO Accreditation

29 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Nutrient Management Program
Nutrient Management Laboratory
Soil Testing Laboratories
Water Quality Monitoring
Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP)

32 FOREST HEALTH AND PLANT INDUSTRIES

Geographic Information System (GIS) - Support
Agriculture Pest Survey (CAPS) - Programs
Plant Pest Regulatory Program (PPRP)
Industrial Hemp
Black Fly Control Program
Pest Identification Laboratory (PIL)
Forest Health Protection Programs - (FHP)
Spotted Lanternfly Program
Lymantria Dispar (Spongy Moth) Program

41 FOOD COMMODITIES

Food Distribution and Child Nutrition Program
The Emergency Food Assistance Program
The Commodity Supplemental Food Program

44 AGRICULTURE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Specialty Crop Block Grants
Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program
USDA Farm-to-School Grant
West Virginia Grown
Veterans and Heroes To Agriculture
Agritourism Industry Poised For Growth

48 ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Fiscal/Human Resources Management
Building and Grounds
Fiscal Position

52 RURAL REHABILITATION LOAN PROGRAM

Applications

54 AGRICULTURE STATISTICS

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

57 NOTES



COMMISSIONER INITIATIVES

COMMISSIONER HIGHLIGHTS & INITIATIVES

KENT A. LEONHARDT

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 2024 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, the state of WV, and Farmlink, a non profit organization that works to combat food insecurity. The apple relief program in 2024 was covered under Section 32 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1935 and the state of WV. WVDA purchased \$6.5 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- 18,894,666 pounds of apples, 449,873 bushels, and 450 tractor trailer loads.



ANIMAL

HEALTH

ANIMAL HEALTH

Animal Health Division's primary mission 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 FSIS-trained Public Health Veterinarians, our inspection staff ensured that meat and poultry products produced at our licensed establishments were safe and wholesome for human consumption. For state fiscal year 2023/24, the inspectors provided daily slaughter and processing inspections at 26 commercial establishments and routine inspections at 24 custom exempt establishments, as well as 318 distributors. Concurrently, inspectors and veterinarians examined 12,213 animals (2,928 cattle, 2,398 swine, 230 sheep, 28 goats, 5 farm-raised deer, 10 bison/buffalo, 6,133 chickens, 976 turkey, 166 ducks/geese, and 284 rabbits). As a result, livestock carcasses and carcass parts totaling 2,116 pounds were condemned as being unfit for human consumption and were prevented from entering the food supply. Conversely, MPIB inspected and passed about 2,521,203 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 animals. These 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, 275 tests were completed, on meat samples, including tests for pathogens such as E. coli, Salmonella, Listeria, as well as for antibiotic residues and other chemicals.

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 FY 2023-2024, there were 28 Class I (breeding farms) and nine Class II (hunting preserves) registered as WV facilities. To maintain USDA program standards, 190 tuberculosis and 190 brucellosis samples were collected and submitted by WV licensed, USDA Designated Accredited Veterinarians. Thirty-seven facility inspections were completed by animal health field technicians. In addition, the same field technicians collected 90 Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) samples for testing at USDA-approved laboratories.

ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY (ADT)

The Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) 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 11,629 premises, with 135 new registrations. Under the federal regulations, 840 Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags are acceptable forms of official identification. The WVDA distributed 8,515 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)

Over 106,000 animals were examined 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 74 honor flock (sheep) and 110 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 32,745 head of cattle were graded in barn and for board sales at WV livestock markets by USDAAMS 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 UNIT

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 continue to be very popular small-scale agriculture endeavors throughout the state. As of December 2024, a total of 1,111 apiarists have registered 14,110 colonies. While the number of beekeepers remained relatively the same, as compared to last year's report, the total number of colonies has decreased by 9.8%. Beekeepers in West Virginia produced a self-reported 241,038 pounds of honey during the 2023 honey production season, which represents an increase as compared to 2022 production (249,436 pounds) of approximately 34%. 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 existing and emerging honeybee pests and diseases.

POULTRY

Commercial poultry is the state's largest animal agriculture sector with a \$424 million annual value of production for 2023 (source: USDA NASS 2024 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 2023, broiler production totaled 83.5 million and turkeys raised in WV totaled 4 million (source: USDA NASS 2024 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.

The National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) was established in the early 1930's to provide a cooperative industry, state, and federal program through which new diagnostic technology can be effectively applied to the improvement of poultry and poultry products throughout the country. The NPIP supports commercial and backyard poultry growers. Animal Health Technicians routinely visit backyard NPIP participants' farms and collect samples. A poultry survey is completed for each backyard flock and

educational material on poultry diseases, specifically avian influenza and information on biosecurity are distributed and discussed.

The West Virginia Poultry Disease Taskforce (WVPDTF) is a collaborative effort between the poultry industry as well as local, state and federal government agencies. The WVPDTF meets at least twice a year to review and update contingency plans related to poultry health emergencies, including but not limited to, prevention, rapid response, and carcass disposal.

Multiple calls with commercial poultry producers and interagency stakeholders were conducted by Animal Health Division related to the ongoing HPAI 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" for WV sheep and goat producers. 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 212,852 tests during state FY 2023-24. 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, Virulent Newcastle Disease, Swine Influenza Virus, and added Influenza A-Mammals due HPAI Dairy Cow outbreak in the U.S. 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 10,456 tests during state FY 2023-24 with focus on livestock regulatory program diseases Equine Infectious Anemia, Brucellosis, Pseudorabies, Bovine Anaplasmosis, Johne's Disease, Bovine Leukosis Virus, and BVD.



SWINE

The development of the Swine Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) began in 2020 with a principal objective to develop and implement an African Swine Fever (ASF) and Classical Swine Fever (CSF) Monitored Certification program modeled after the National Poultry Improvement Plan. SHIP aims to mitigate risk of disease introduction and demonstrate evidence of freedom of disease to support ongoing interstate commerce and international trade during a trade impacting disease response and recovery period.

Moorefield's staff veterinarian and Animal Health Field Technicians have been busy educating WV swine producers about the SHIP program. SHIP brochures were distributed at extension events, fair check-ins, and via social media. Staff attended the annual US SHIP House of Delegates meeting. As part of SHIP and the Secure Pork Supply, the Certified Swine Sample Collector Training Program was created. WVDA Animal Health plans to host a Certified Swine Sample Collector (CSSC) training course in FY 25 to allow those who successfully complete the training to collect diagnostic swine samples in the event of a disease outbreak.

WV ONE HEALTH INITIATIVES

One Health is a collaborative approach that aims to optimize the health of people, animals, plants, and the environment. Multiple West Virginia State agencies come together on a quarterly One Health call where each agency provides updates relating to One Health. Intra-agency collaboration occurs on events such as the HPAI crossover into dairy cattle and humans, swine influenza virus crossover into humans, and the possibility of other such events. In May 2024, WVDA collaborated with WVU Extension and Maryland Department of Health on a West Virginia Healthy Fairs Symposium which served to educate on zoonotic diseases. WVDA is currently in the process of developing a One Health Plan and situation manual to be used by multiple state agencies in the event of a One Health emergency. We plan to have multiple planning and development meetings, in addition to tabletop exercises.

VETERINARY BIOLOGICS REQUESTS

USDA-APHIS Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB) regulates veterinary biologics (vaccines, bacterins, antisera, diagnostic kits, and other products of biological origin) to ensure the veterinary biologics available for the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of animal diseases are pure, safe, potent, and effective. Local practitioners submit requests to biologic manufacturing companies, and they contact the State Veterinarian's office seeking approval for these products to be made and distributed to licensed veterinarians in the state of West Virginia. In 2023, we had a total of 43 requests/approvals. So far in 2024, we have had 42 requests/approvals. Some of the biologics that we have approved include Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease Virus, Rabbit Hemorrhagic Diseases Virus, Parvo monoclonal antibody, monoclonal antibody cancer immunotherapeutics, and other conditional or experimental use authorized vaccines. The biologics companies are required to send quarterly sale reports and adverse event reports.

WV SPAY AND NEUTER PROGRAM

The WV Spay Neuter Program (WVSNP) has a presence in 54 of 55 West Virginia counties. The number of grantees increased to 76 which were awarded \$1,144,324.89, a 107% increase from the previous year. The West Virginia Federation of Humane Organizations made this possible by donating \$450,000.00 to the WVSNP fund via the Mug Z Moo grant. Along with \$432,098.00 in grantees' matching funds, the number of surgical alterations increased to a record high of 18,168 procedures consisting of 9,050 felines, 5,386 community cat designated felines, and 3,732 canines. The WVDA spay and neuter advisory committee was very instrumental in securing the Mug Z Moo grant funding and continues to guide WVSNP in meeting the challenge of West Virginia's pet overpopulation.

STATE VETERINARIAN OFFICE

This office provides daily consultation to producers, veterinary practitioners, animal industry stakeholders for a wide variety of queries arising from both commercial and backyard agriculture operations. The office also frequently collaborates with local, state, and federal agencies for a wide variety of issues. The most frequent interagency cooperation is with USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services for cooperative agreements related to surveillance, detection, response, mitigation, and eradication (if possible) for incursions of foreign animal diseases or domestic animal diseases with high index consequences for the economy of production animal agriculture. Animal Health Division conducts and participates for wide array of emergency preparedness and response activities and training. All division veterinarians attain USDA's Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) Diagnostician certification after intensive training. FAD suspect cases require such a state or federal certified veterinarian conduct the investigation, sampling, and submission to an approved lab for testing. Interagency cooperation and communication with other state agencies most frequently involves rabies, arboviruses (EG-West Nile Virus), tick surveillance, and other diseases with potential to have deleterious effects for people, livestock, wildlife, or the environment. The office coordinates or participates for commercial poultry industry, interagency stakeholders, and other agencies to provide animal agriculture communications and notices of arising concern conditions. This included the large-scale HPAI 2002-23 outbreak, as well as cooperation with WV livestock markets, the Livestock market Association of America (LMA), WVU and WV State Extension, WVVMA, WV Poultry Association, and several other animal industry associations. West Virginia's interagency Dangerous Wild Animal Board and multi-partner Livestock Care Standards Board are both supported by the State Veterinarian's required attendance. Animal Health Division officers also serve on several national organization committees for United States Animal Health Association and National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials.





WVDA



FARMS

FARMS

HUTTONSVILLE, PRUNTYTOWN AND LAKIN FARMS

The Farms unit of West Virginia Department of Agriculture is comprised of just under 10,000 acres in three locations. The Huttonsville farm is the most diverse having a cow/calf herd; back grounding calves; and producing corn, forage beans, oats, and hay. On the cow/calf side, the farm will calve out 200 cows and 75 replacement heifers. These calves will be a result of planned mating utilizing artificial insemination from bulls selected for feed efficiency and then cleaned up with WVDA herd bulls that have been selected from WVU's Wardensville Spring Bull Test. In the past, we have fed cattle out in our enclosed feedlot. We are now using this facility to background our calves to 900 pounds, then sending the calves to a feed yard in Kansas (see more below).

In FY2024, the WVDA has incorporated a more robust rotational grazing program, utilizing pastures more effectively during one of the worst droughts West Virginia has experienced. Corn acres were reduced to 95 acres this year, and 30 acres of forage beans were added as an additional protein source and as a natural weed control. The beans were chopped in the field and bagged as silage. Corn will be chopped and stored in bags and in the silo as silage. Shelled corn was also harvested. Ten acres of picking corn was stored on the ear and will be ground over the winter and used as a top dressing to the silage. Oats were added as another new crop and were harvested early, baled green, and wrapped. Those fields were grazed after baling, and a cover crop of rye was planted that will be harvested in early spring of 2025.

The Pruntytown farm has a split cow herd with 90 spring calving cows and 100 fall calving cows. These cows are more intensely bred AI and are being cleaned up with natural sires, many of which were born on the Pruntytown farm and developed thru WVU's Wardensville Fall Bull Test.

During FY2024, the Pruntytown facility hosted training for USDA veterinarians and field staff. They had the opportunity to conduct mock testing and evaluations of cattle should there be a disease outbreak in the US. Instead of traveling to Ames, IA, this was an opportunity for USDA employees from the eastern part of the U.S. to participate in a training program closer to home. Twenty-two USDA employees participated in this training program.

GENERAL MCCAUSLAND MEMORIAL FARM

The General McCausland Memorial Farm calved 100 spring cows. Those calves were marketed locally. The McCausland cows are bred naturally to bulls purchased from WVU's Southern Bull Test. Thirty acres of corn was harvested and stored in the silo as feed for the cow herd. The harvest was lighter this year, as this area was very dry due to the drought.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AND WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

During FY2024, the WVDA farms worked in cooperation with West Virginia University (Dr. Matt Wilson & Jerry Yates) by supplying cattle for studies regarding feed and water intake to determine what cattle are more efficient by eating less feed and consuming less water, while maintaining adequate growth. Additionally, WVDA and WVU are working with Hy-Plains Feedlot in Montezuma, KS by doing the same work and relating it to carcass quality. This will be a project that will take several years to complete, in order to collect enough data. The information collected will be the first of its kind. Currently, there are 100+ head of cattle in Kansas being evaluated for water and feed efficiency. Plans call to have an additional 100-150 head of cattle in Kansas in the coming year (FY2025). WVU also plans to evaluate our replacement heifers during the first half of 2025, at their facilities, by using the same technology to determine feed and water efficiency. These studies in West Virginia and Kansas will enable cattle producers across the country to use feed and water efficiency data as a tool in their breeding decisions.

West Virginia State University continues to work with the WVDA staff at the Lakin farm utilizing WVDA high tunnels for trials in growing several varieties of peppers, tomatoes, and cabbages. They grow different assortments of melons, peppers and sweet corn varieties outside in row crop simulations to evaluate plant characteristics for sweetness, spicy temperatures, bio controls and pest management. Both WVU and WVSU have published numerous research reports based on the data collected in collaboration with WVDA.



CEDAR LAKES



**CONFERENCE
CENTER**

CEDAR LAKES CONFERENCE CENTER

CEDAR LAKES CONFERENCE CENTER

Cedar Lakes Conference Center continues to show an increase in the number of groups visiting the facility for both day and multi-day events. The furtherance of online marketing strategies has had a positive impact on the number of new visitors and organizations that have registered to come to Cedar Lakes. This includes the in-house Craft programs, as well as organizations committing to adopt Cedar Lakes as their new venue. The West Virginia Dance Group and the West Virginia State Quilt Guild are just a few of our new clients. In addition, the Lakeview Dining Hall has experienced an increase in its offerings of special banquets and large reunion celebrations. The facility can boast a dynamic and attractive setting and a great view overlooking the grounds and lakes.

The Facility Improvement projects for this past year have included resurfacing the playground, stocking Mirror Lakes and Large Lake, bathroom renovations at FHA Cottage in the classroom area, pouring concrete at the FFA Pavillion, major upgrades to the covered bridge camp fire area to include portable bleachers and a stone fire pit, establishment of a memory garden at the historic log house, dead tree removal around the facility, renovation of the dormitories and restrooms in the Main Lodge, spring cleaning/trash removal at the Manpower building and maintenance area, and partial roof replacement at the Curriculum Lab stairwell. These projects and upgrades were made possible through external funding from the Jackson County Commission, Jackson County Community Foundation, Cedar Lakes Foundation, and others.





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 situations are 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, State Interoperable Radio Network (SIRN), serve as SIRN RIC One Vice-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 hosted by other organizations including preparation, training, table-top exercises, functional exercises, etc.
- Continue to identify WVDA staff to implement/train/coordinate WVDA's Incident Management Team and Incident Command System classes. Assist with and participate in training opportunities and various WVDA emergency plan development as a result of Animal Health's FADPREP grant funding.
- Attended Incident Command System Logistics Officer class in Omaha, Nebraska.
- Participated in development and conducting of National Veterinary Stockpile full scale functional exercise at the Donated Foods warehouse in Ripley. Continue to work on improvement plan.
- 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. Set up and remove command post for Animal Health Division, provide two-way radios, handwashing stations, animals panels, etc.
- Assisted WV Department of Natural Resources with transporting four trailers of elk from Kentucky to Logan County, WV.
- Work to develop plans and coordinate with Animal Health Division to provide staff, equipment, personal protection equipment, and disposal of animals during WV's single incident of high path avian influenza (HPAI). Continue to work on preparations to respond to a HPAI incident, including WV Poultry Disease Task Force.
- Coordinate the transfer of two incinerators to WVDA facilities and obtain necessary permits.
- Facilitate and assist in teaching Bovine Emergency Response Plan (BERP) class. One train-the-trainer class and one student class were held in April at Union, Monroe County. Work on continuing BERP program.
- Arrange/host/coordinate/teach multiple biosecurity, AED/First Aid/CPR, active shooter, two-way radio, agriculture all-hazards classes. Taught eight AED/First Aid/CPR classes.
- Participated in displays at two Boy Scout events at Glen Jean, WV.



FOOD

SAFETY

FOOD SAFETY

In FY2024, WVDA Regulatory officers traveled over 151,961 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 were negotiated, signed, and initiated this fiscal year. These cover 10 Human Food Sanitation Warehouse Inspections (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) and seafood inspections. These contracts generated a total of \$8,580 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 has a contract with USDA to complete COOL inspections. Three Regulatory Officers conduct these inspections that require testing and certifications prior to completing inspections. During FY2024, 30 inspections across the state were conducted that generated \$18,000.

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 653 Frozen Dessert Permits in the state and 611 Dairy Permits issued for Dairy Distributors, for a total fee collection of \$10,437.

The laboratory received 3,237 frozen desserts and dairy product samples for coliform bacterial counts and standard plates from 783 facility inspections.

Regulatory officers assisted 21 manufacturers of soft serve ice cream with proper cleaning and sanitizing procedures. Under the Frozen Dessert and Imitation Frozen Dessert Program, thirty-seven 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 41 total components tested. Samples were analyzed for total coliforms, standard plate counts, and Salmonella species. This contract generated \$21,147.

FARMERS MARKETS

The WVDA regulates and inspects 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 314 markets. There were 43 market inspections completed, with 125 registered vendor permits and three vendor inspections at farmers markets and 38 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 42 educational outreaches.

EGGS

WVDA received and processed 1,570 Small Egg Producer Permits this fiscal year. Regulatory officers conducted retail egg inspections at 160 firms on 877 lots of eggs, issuing 15 embargos.

PRODUCE SAFETY

WVDA continued into year eight 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 to more than 185,000 people statewide.
- One on-farm workshop with a farm tour component
- Three Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) grower trainings.
- Two “Writing Your Food Safety Plan” training.
- Exceeded the 2024 target for outreach and education goals.
- Data Acquisition and Program Manager position filled.
- All covered farms inspected in 2023-2024.
- Farm inventory verification surpassed the Y3, Y4, and Y5 milestones for the current 5-year CAP agreement. Inventory is at 275% of the estimated NASS number.

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 help federal and state programs better direct their regulatory activities toward reducing foodborne illness. WVDA employees conduct inspections for the MFRPS grant and plan 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 2024, 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 FY2024, there were 1,669 registered hemp and kratom retailers bringing in \$720,000 in revenue and approximately 2,157 hemp products registered totaling \$254,000. In FY 2025 the WVDA will begin to register all kratom products. The total for Select Plant-Based Derivatives is \$974,000.



**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 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

Two contracts with the United States Food and Drug Administration were negotiated, signed, and initiated this fiscal year. These cover 10 Human Food Sanitation Warehouse Inspections (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) and seafood inspections. These contracts generated a total of \$8,580 in revenue.

WEST VIRGINIA COMMERCIAL FEED LAW

Under the Feed Law, there were 138 non-medicated feed samples, seven medicated feed samples, and 14 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. Fifty-one violations were assessed during FY2024, with two embargoes issued for non-registration or non-compliance labels.

Registration for feed products:

- Commercial feed guarantor – 315 (\$131,500 generated).
- Large package pet food (over 10 lb.) – 2,204 (\$220,400 generated).
- Small package pet food – 11,805 (\$885,375 generated)
- Specialty pet food (1#/under) – 1,141 (\$45,640 generated).
- Commercial feed manufacturing permits – 52 (\$2,355 generated).
- Commercial feed distributing permits – 210 (\$6,300 generated).
- Commercial feed tonnage – 301,656 (\$298,679 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 FY2024, 264 fertilizer samples were collected resulting in four violations. A total of 39,207 tons of fertilizer were reported sold in West Virginia. Three hundred and ten companies registered products. There are 153 companies registering 721 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 46 lime manufacturers registered selling 98 lime products with 66,667 tons sold in West Virginia. WVDA has nine licensed lime distributors registered in West Virginia, and the program revenue for the fiscal year is \$4,900.

SEED

WVDA Regulatory officers performed seed inspections 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 80 seed facility inspections in which they issued six embargoes this past year. There were 28,498 pounds of seed potatoes sold in the state. There were no lots of seed potatoes embargoed. One hundred and sixty-nine seedsmen were registered in FY2024, and 375 seed stamps for individual seed racks were purchased and mailed to retail and wholesale distributors.

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. 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 FY2024, the Agriculture Health and Safety Coordinator provided training for 70 agriculture workers and 55 agriculture handlers.

In FY2024, 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 1,717 commercial and public applicators along with 2,600 registered technicians. There were 684 licensed pesticide application businesses registered.



WVDA

LABORATORIES

2-22
Myca
Associated LIMS user
10/31

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 340 samples of animal feed, pet food, and forage products in FY2024 and analyzed 333 samples of animal feed, pet food, and forage products in FY2024. 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 received 287 samples in FY2024 and analyzed 283 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 FY2024 the laboratory received 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 5,042 frozen desserts and dairy product samples for coliform bacterial counts and standard plate counts. Of those samples, 535 were found to be violative. 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 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 230 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 1,043 samples were analyzed by the laboratory with seven samples testing positive. The laboratory also analyzed an additional 483 samples as part of the Laboratory Flexible Funding Model (LFFM) Cooperative Agreement.

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 FY2024, the laboratory received 62 hemp samples. The laboratory also analyzed 15 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 four, the WVDA received \$700,000. 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.

ISO ACCREDITATION

In FY2024, 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 PROTECTION

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 176 farmers, collected 1,691 soil samples, 35 manure/litter samples, and completed 167 nutrient management plans on 37,671.9 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 FY2024, 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 and Cacapon Rivers

- 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 1,821 water samples that were collected from these streams for the FY2023/2024 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 efforts in April 2003. This group helps to coordinate the implementation plan. 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 the 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 West Virginia has made significant water quality improvements and has already met its 2025 nutrient and sediment goals. West Virginia is the only state in the program to meet and exceed these goals.





**FOREST HEALTH
AND PLANT
INDUSTRIES**

FOREST HEALTH AND PLANT INDUSTRIES

The 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.

General:

- 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.
- Worked closely with academic institutions, USDA, USFS, and NRCS on statewide data projects.

Field Work:

- Managed the Forest Disturbance Mapping and Digital Mobile Sketch Mapping (DMSM) programs for West Virginia, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service.
- All staff received rigorous training in DMSM to use in the field in preparation for a busy spongy moth defoliation season.
- 141,079 acres of spongy moth defoliation were mapped by field staff using DMSM.
- Administered 22 Kobo Collect forest and agricultural disease and pest surveys.
- Created property parcel specific topographic and satellite imagery maps for the Avenza application.
- Used staff feedback via surveys and one-on-one meetings to improve field survey operations.
- Collaborated with Michigan State University and Virginia Tech to administer and troubleshoot issues with the Slow the Spread (STS) Field Maps program.

Map and Data analysis:

- Uniquely created over 100 quantity, choropleth, dot, and category maps for WVDA, USDA, USFS, and NRCS.
- Created specialized address lists for targeted populations across West Virginia.
- Calculated annual survey results for end of year reports (ex: acres of spongy moth defoliation by county, acres of hemlock woolly adelgid suppression by state park, acres of STS program category by trapping grid, total STS traps estimated and set by trapping grid, etc.)

- Used ForWarn to identify areas of disturbance in the tree canopy cover for the entire state of West Virginia.
- Extracted ForWarn data and performed complex data analysis to identify areas for field staff to ground survey.
- Sent out 70 areas of interest polygons for field staff to ground survey with DMSM.
- Maintained complex databases and performed routine maintenance and data backup.

Public Outreach:

- Managed and updated website content for all division programs.
- Slow the Spread, Lymantria Dispar Cooperative Suppression, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Suppression, Spotted Lanternfly quarantine, and other various forest and agricultural pest program activities were updated on the WVDA website for public consumption.
- Created posters for meetings and edited content on display panels for invasive species such as spotted lanternfly and spongy moth.

Hardware:

- Managed staff tablets, computers, cellphones, and tablet accessories.
- Installed ArcGIS Pro and ArcMap on staff computers, installed and updated tablet applications, kept tablet inventory up to date.
- 10 new tablets were purchased and setup for field staff.
- Researched tablet specifications that would best be used in the field in adverse weather and connectivity conditions.

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 13 sites in 10 counties for three insect pests and visual surveys were conducted for three 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 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 20 sites in 11 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 six sites in six 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 15 sites in five 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 35 sites in 18 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 seven sites in five 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 circle traps were set in “high risk “areas near railroads and material movement. Traps were monitored every two weeks from May to October.
- Dozens of tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) sites were monitored for SLF across the state. In counties where tree-of-heaven is not common, locations of tree-of-heaven were recorded for future survey of SLF and removal of the plant.
- New SLF populations were discovered in Marshall, Taylor, Monongalia, and Wood counties. Delimiting surveys were conducted to determine 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 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 the 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 posted to social media encouraging any suspect positives to be reported to bugbusters@wvda.us. WVDA also participated in regional bi-weekly SLF informational calls.
- 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 Spangly 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 122 nurseries and 302 nursery dealerships and conducted 186 nursery and/or dealer inspections, resulting in the stop-sale of 79 pieces of nursery stock because of injurious plant pests, plant quarantines, or lack of registration during interstate movement. Subsequently issued one notice of violation for barberry plants at Tractor Supply Company (Teays Valley location).
- Conducted 641 inspections and issued 1646 USDA-APHIS-PPQ phytosanitary certificates for 3037 shipping containers covering international log and lumber shipments.
- Visited 63 sites to investigate the movement of articles capable of transporting the *Lymantria dispar* life stages into uninfested areas.
- Collected 275 leaf samples and visited 25 nurseries or nursery dealers in 18 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 one occasion. Contacts and an inspection were performed. A sample was collected and subsequently tested negative for *Phytophthora ramorum*.

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.

- 69 full licenses to grow industrial hemp were issued for the 2023 growing season.
 - 46 varieties of industrial hemp were grown.
 - 18.4 acres were planted.
 - 525 lbs. for fiber.
 - 1,991 lbs. of flower material.
 - 1,035 lbs. of compost 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 eight aerial black fly treatments in 2024. One additional spray will also be performed prior to end of year, making a total of nine treatments for 2024.
- Conducted 11 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.

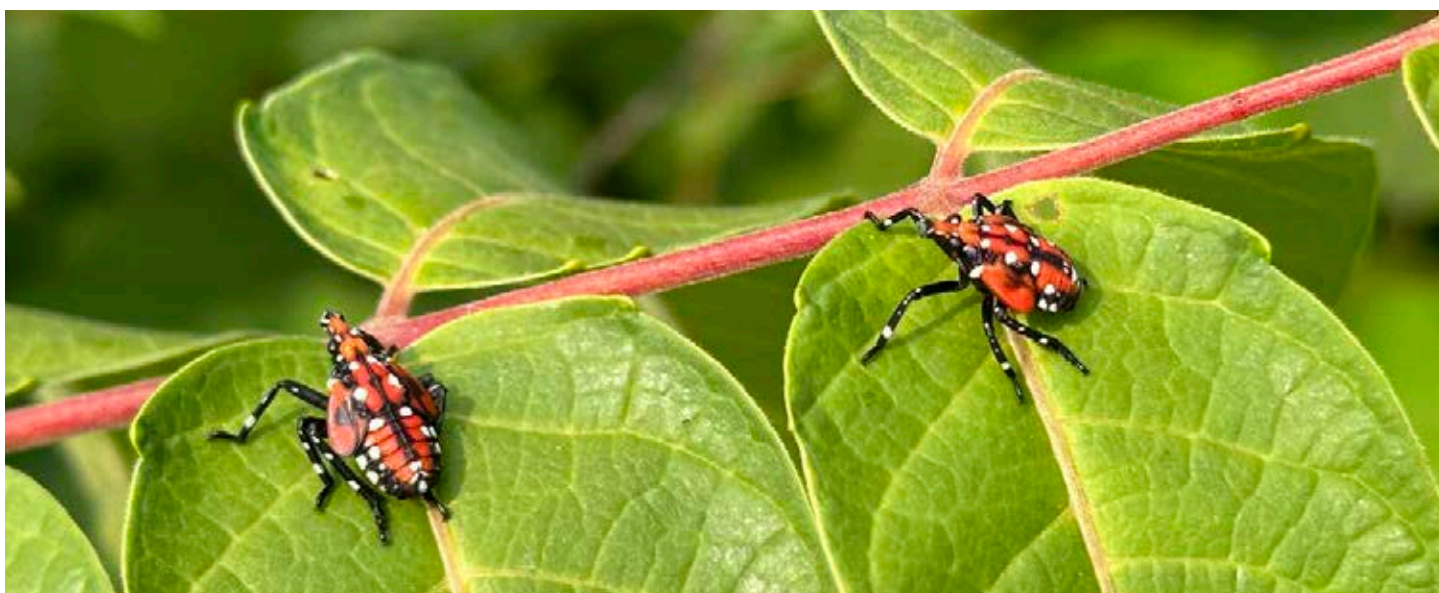
- Screened 123 trap samples for the presence of two species of exotic scolytid bark beetles, two species of exotic long-horned beetles, and one species of exotic root weevil for the CAPS (Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey) Exotic Woodborer/Bark Beetle Survey program. None of the target pests were found.
- Screened 49 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 54 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 21 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 169 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 230 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 67 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.
- Screened four trap samples for the presence of two exotic species of moth pests for the PPA Grape Commodity Survey. None of the target pests were found.
- Conducted visual detection surveys for the invasive garlic mustard weed, *Ailaria petiolate*, for the Noxious Weeds Biocontrol Survey Program (JKGM) in Cabell, Fayette, Greenbrier, Kanawha, Raleigh, Randolph, Ritchie, Summers, Tucker, and Wood Counties. Garlic mustard was found in all surveyed counties.
- Provided insect museum information requests, specimen loans, specialized insect identifications, and other research related services to the following institutions: Cedara College of Agriculture, South Africa; Clemson University; US Forest Service; University of Sopron Forest Pest Institute, Hungary; WV Master Naturalist Program, WV University; WV Entomological Society; WV Department of Natural Resources; WVDA personnel; and online to BugGuide.net taxonomic group.
- Handled 2,744 pest calls, 1,452 pest specimens, and eight information requests. All pest specimen information was entered into the National Plant Diagnostic Network database.
- Provided two youth and seven adult 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. 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 found in the summer of 2023 in Ohio County. No new infestations were detected.
- Processed numerous samples submitted by field staff, extension agents, other government agencies, and the public using diagnostic tools such as PCR and ELISA.
- HWA has now been detected in all 55 counties of the state.
- Treated 1,309 hemlock trees at 11 different sites. Treatments will continue throughout the fall and next spring.
- Elongate Hemlock Scale is now found in 10 counties. Fayette, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Kanawha, Monongalia, Mercer, Monroe, Ohio, Summers, and Wood are now confirmed positive for EHS.
- Tubakia leaf spot on red oak was found throughout the state, as well as general oak decline of red and white oak species.
- Spotted Lanternfly is now present in 14 WV counties: Berkeley, Jefferson, Hampshire, Morgan, Mineral, Hardy, Grant, Taylor, Hancock, Ohio, Marshall, Monongalia, Brooke, and Wood.
- Two of five long term monitoring plots were monitored and remeasured for oak decline in Pocahontas and Greenbrier Counties. The rest will be remeasured next summer.
- Elm zigzag sawfly surveys were conducted in the northern panhandle and northcentral part of the state and was found in Monongalia County.
- Visual surveys for Laurel Wilt symptoms were conducted on sassafras.
- Yellow poplar weevil and tulip tree scale were reported across the state.
- Drought conditions occurred statewide. Most counties were considered in a state of severe or extreme drought. The counties most severely impacted and considered in exceptional drought were Mason, Jackson, Roane, Wood, Putnam, Wirt, and Calhoun.



LYCORMA DELICATULA (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 September 6, 2024, spotted lanternfly is found in 13 of West Virginia's 55 counties. These counties are Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Hampshire, Mineral, Hardy, Grant, Taylor, Hancock, Monongalia, Marshall, Ohio, 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 2024, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) has continued efforts to control spotted lanternfly in counties where the insect has been confirmed and continues to monitor and remove tree-of-heaven in areas of the state where lanternfly have 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 try and locate these traps in areas where hitchhiking spotted lanternfly are likely to appear, such 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.

2024 Program Accomplishments:

- WVDA staff have conducted over 500 visual surveys for spotted lanternfly across West Virginia.
- Approximately 30 spotted lanternfly traps have been installed during the 2024 field season by WVDA staff across West Virginia. These traps are to be monitored every two weeks.
- Over 1,151 acres of tree-of-heaven have been treated for spotted lanternfly, as of 9/6/2024.
- Four large billboards have been installed to inform the public about spotted lanternfly.
- Spotted lanternfly literature has been distributed to businesses, rest stops, and recreational areas during 2024.
- Between 1/1/2024 and 9/6/2024, WVDA staff have participated in 14 outreach events in the form of either a booth or presentation to promote awareness of spotted lanternfly in West Virginia.



LYMANTRIA DISPAR (SPONGY MOTH/GYPSY MOTH) PROGRAM

- The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) Lymantria dispar (Spongy - Gypsy 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 (SMCS) and Slow the Spread (STS) Programs, both of which are carried out in cooperation with the USDA-FS. Under the SMCS 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; first, to retard the spread of the pest into non-infested areas of the state through the Gypsy Moth Slow the Spread (STS) Program and, second, to suppress spongy moth populations in infested areas to limit, as much as possible, defoliation and tree mortality through the WVDA Lymantria Dispar Cooperative State County Landowner (CSCL) Program. The WVDA Spongy Moth Program minimizes the adverse impact on West Virginia's forest resources. The goal is to preserve aesthetic values and protect people from the annoyance and health problems that can occur when in contact with large numbers of spongy moth caterpillars.

LDCS Accomplishments:

- Forest Disturbance Monitor was used to determine Forest Disturbance areas. Ground visits were made to the disturbance areas, and a total of 141,079 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. Acres defoliated by county are Berkeley 30,757 acres, Grant 8,327 acres, Hampshire 20,794 acres, Hardy 12,743 acres, Mineral 1,366 acres, Morgan 34,202 acres, Pendleton 31,831 acres, and Pocahontas 1,058 acres.
- Ground surveyed 173,697 acres of private and state lands in West Virginia signed up by landowners and managers.
- Completed 1,906 1/40-acre plot spongy moth egg mass density surveys and the egg mass viability study.
- Visited 8,542 landowners for spongy moth presence.
- Aerial treatments were conducted on 25,120 acres in Berkeley, Hampshire, Hardy, and Morgan Counties. Foray 48B treatment was selected by landowners on 2,986 acres and Mimic 2LV was selected on 22,134 acres.
- 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, homeowners associations, and campgrounds.

STS Accomplishments:

- Set 3,901 gypsy moth traps covering 9,618,566 acres.
- STS had one mating disruption block consisting of 6,894 acres on the Mingo/McDowell border.
- All traps have been removed from the field, and 32,899 male gypsy moths have been caught. This is a 62% decrease from the 85,971 moths caught in 2023.
- Staff worked at various festivals and events, including Ag Day at the Capitol, The Hunting and Fishing Show, West Virginia Arts and Craft Fair, National Hunting and Fishing Days.
- Completed 10,593 trap site visits.
- Placed electronic traps at four 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.



FOOD

COMMODITIES

FOOD COMMODITIES

FOOD DISTRIBUTION AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture's (WVDA) Food Distribution Program provides economic support to West Virginia school-age children and to those in need through distribution of United States Department of Agriculture (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 all USDA Foods meet the dietary guidelines for Americans, including reduced levels of fats, sodium, and sugar. USDA Foods 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. The cases have an average estimated value of more than \$9.2 million. The WVDA also delivers USDA sponsored Department of Defense fresh fruits and vegetables to schools on a bi-weekly basis. The value of these fresh fruits and vegetables is more than \$3 million. Commodity foods are delivered to 53 county school systems and around 50 private schools and agencies across the state. 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 EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TEFAP) THE COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM (CSFP)

The Food Distribution Program also oversees The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) as well as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). 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. TEFAP is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans, including the elderly, by providing them with emergency food at no cost. TEFAP is available in all 55 counties. 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 10,409 boxes of food being delivered to seniors in need throughout West Virginia 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 WVDA oversees TEFAP and CSFP.

During FFY24, West Virginia received an entitlement for TEFAP of \$2,500,080 to purchase food for the two foodbanks to be dispersed to multiple food pantries and soup kitchens throughout the state. This allowed a total of 1,795,486 lbs. of food to be purchased and brought into West Virginia for citizens in need. In addition to this entitlement value, the state received \$6,197,543 worth of BONUS USDA commodities that were offered to the state in the amount of 4,223,673 lbs. Along with the TEFAP program and the bonus commodities, West Virginia also received USDA commodities from the Commodity Credit Corporation (TEFAP CCC) at the value of \$3,720,123 and totaling 3,284,505 lbs.

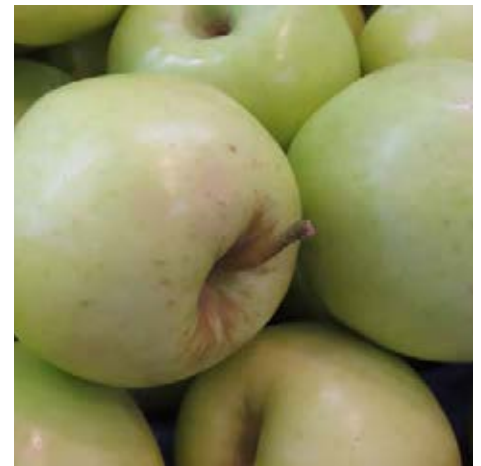
During FFY24, WVDA passed-through \$1,053,540 in TEFAP administrative funding to the state's two food banks from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, for expenses associated with transporting, storing, handling, repackaging, processing, and distributing USDA Foods. An additional \$123,447.15 in administrative funding was passed through to the food banks during this time, for expenses associated with TEFAP CCC commodities, and \$2,962.08 was passed through as part of TEFAP Farm to Food Bank (FTFB) program. FTFB is a federally funded (USDA) program that's purpose is to reduce food waste by capturing donated food; building relationships between hunger relief organizations and agricultural producers, processors, and distributors; and providing food to those in need.

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, West Virginia is distributing 10,509 boxes of nutritious food to low-income seniors in our state. The CSFP is geared toward the elderly who fall below the poverty line. Individuals that meet the criteria are offered a 30-40 lb. box of food each month to help supplement their diets. These boxes are filled with protein items, dairy, fruits, and vegetables. CSFP is not based on entitlement, however, it is based on the caseload amount that West Virginia 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.

During FFY24, WVDA passed through \$987,586 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.

During SFY24, WVDA passed through \$1,763,894 in Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) funding to the state's two food banks from the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, for the purchase of food produced within the state or within 400 miles of the delivery destination, to help support local, regional, and underserved producers. This helped increase local food consumption, as well as building and expanding economic opportunities for local and underserved producers.

The WVDA passed through \$145,241 in funding during FFY2024 to the state's two food banks from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, to help the food banks expand the reach of TEFAP to remote, rural, and low-income areas that are currently underserved through the TEFAP Reach and Resiliency Grant initiative.





AGRICULTURE
BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT



AGRICULTURE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANTS

WVDA awarded \$259,359 in Specialty Crop Block Grants to five projects with the FY 23 Farm Bill funding. Some of the projects awarded included funding FARMacy WV: Prescriptions for produce, Christmas Tree Education and Promotion and others.

SENIOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program certified 155 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. The redemption rate was approximately 100% due to an additional federal grant. The total impact for the State of West Virginia is over \$700,000.00.

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 Child Nutrition Program programming, including local procurement and agricultural education.

WEST VIRGINIA GROWN

The state's branding program for farm and food products that sell, serve, and support continued to grow, adding 97 members since Jan. 1, 2024. Membership continues to include producers through growing and manufacturing value-added foods, partners through serving or selling WV products in their establishments, and supporters through the promotion and preservation of West Virginia's farm and food community. In the coming year, restaurants and retailers, along with farms and value-added food producers, will continue to enjoy the benefits of membership. Those benefits include use of the popular WV Grown logo, inclusion in the WV Grown Directory updated annually, and inclusion in special events, such as the Winter Blues Farmers Market and the State Fair Country Store. A brand awareness campaign was conducted in 2023 to increase public recognition of the brand and the message behind it. After the campaign, WVDA contracted with Probolsky Research to complete a baseline survey of WV Grown brand awareness, opinion among consumers in West Virginia, and to provide a summary of the findings. In 2025, Probolsky will complete a follow up survey and report the findings.



VETERANS AND HEROES TO AGRICULTURE

The Veterans & 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 & Heroes to Agriculture Grant Program (VHAGP) awarded \$24,000 to groups and organizations working to support veterans and heroes in the agriculture sector (JoJo's Taco Inc- \$6,976, Every Life Matters Transformation Ranch Inc- \$5,127, Wanishi Foundation- \$3,656, Mountaineer Farm Crawl- \$2,240, and WV Military Authority- \$6,000). The program hosted its second Pitch Competition in March 2024 at Cedar Lakes Conference Center, awarding \$60,000 in funding between eight finalists to start or expand their agribusiness (Blue Sky Orchard- \$12,275, Tree Dragon Farm- \$6,402, Sugar Bottom Farm- \$7,725, Turtle on a Post Farm- \$6,719, JarHead Farms- \$6,719, Riffle Farms- \$6,719, Wright's FARMacy- \$6,719, and Moonstruck Maple- \$6,719). 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 with 24 members now using the blended mark. Additionally, WVDA provided over 40 scholarship awards to individuals across the state looking to grow their knowledge.

The Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture program was proud to partner with the West Virginia Farmers Market Association (WVFMA) to sponsor a poultry processing trailer for the Eastern Panhandle, as well as outreach and education for the program. In addition, WVFMA partnered on a Heroes Market program for Veterans Day to support and honor Veteran producers in the state and awarded three market kits to 3B Farm, Community Markets Inc., and Black Sheep Bloomery. The Gold Star Mothers Living Memorial Project dedicated three orchards (Cacapon State Park in Morgan County, Grand Vue Park in Marshall County, and Camp Virgil Tate in Kanawha County), marking a total of 12 orchards across the state.

Veterans & Heroes continued work with the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide by providing farm stress management and suicide prevention tools to WVDA staff, partners, members, and community. Additionally, WVDA supported the "Spare an Hour, Save a Life" program with West Virginia Prevention Solutions, which included Suicide Prevention Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) Training to the West Virginia Agriculture Community.

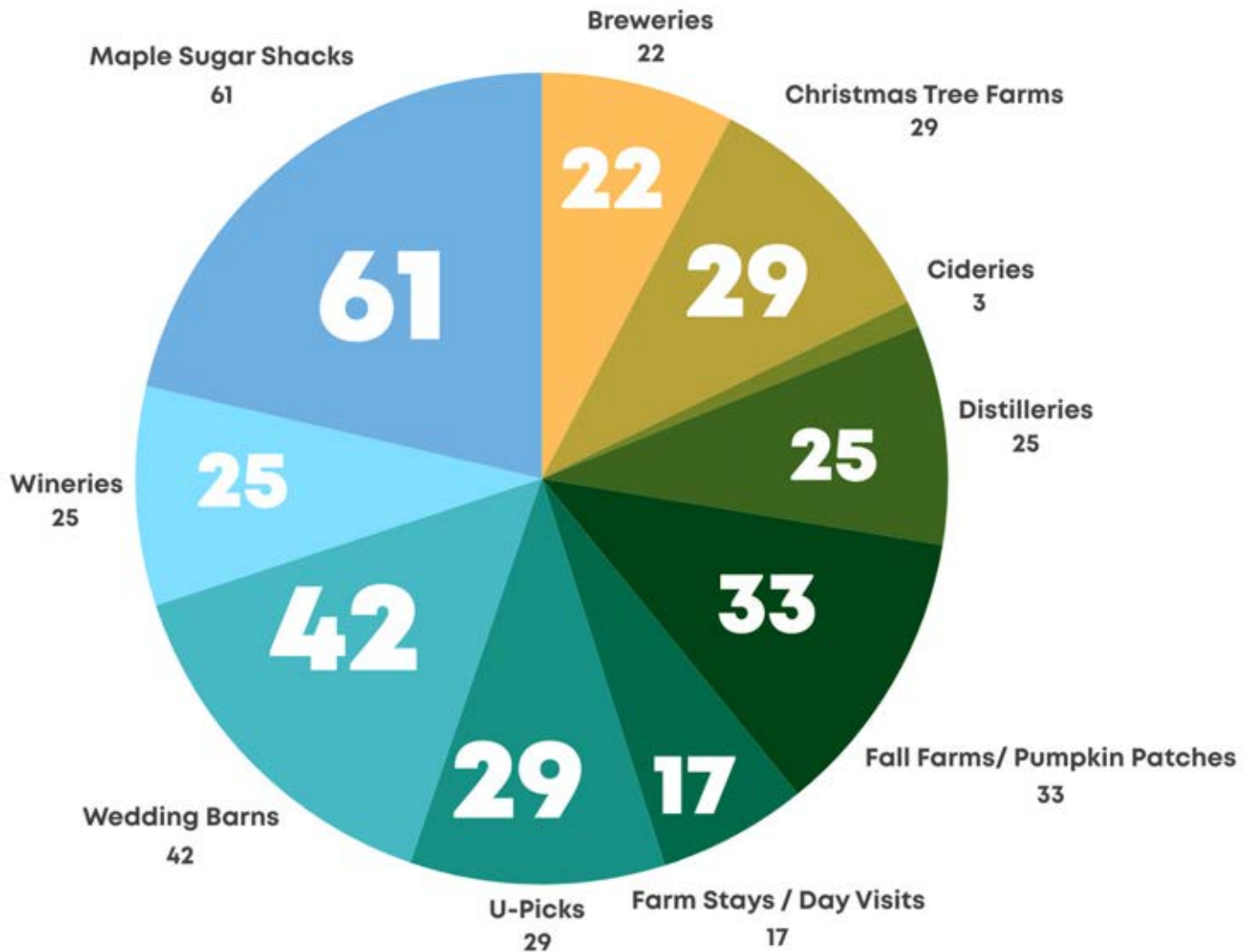
Veterans & Heroes continuously seeks to further promote the development of agricultural industries, products, and marketing opportunities across the state.



AGRITOURISM INDUSTRY POISED FOR GROWTH

Agritourism has continued to grow in West Virginia in the past four years, with more than 300 agritourism operators spread across the Mountain State. We saw communities supporting WV agritourism this year through four different agritourism farm crawls (Preston County, Mountaineer Country, Greenbrier Valley, and Hampshire County). The industry continues to grow and expand operators through new and expanding farms. More producer education opportunities are coming in this fiscal year.

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



A person in a white shirt is shown from the chest down, handling papers in a filing cabinet. The person's hands are visible, one holding a paper and the other near a keyboard. The background is a blurred office setting. The text 'ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES' is overlaid on the bottom half of the image. The word 'ADMINISTRATIVE' is in white, and 'SERVICES' is in yellow. A green arrow graphic points to the right, partially overlapping the text.

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 ending June 30, 2024, the Fiscal Management section processed expenditure transactions totaling \$51.9 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 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:

- Provided independent monthly review and reconciliation of 10,941 P-card transactions, totaling more than \$4.5 million.
- Performed fiscal management and oversight monitoring for a portfolio of \$44.5 million in federal funding (total programs obligated to agency as of June 30, 2024).
- Tracked 109,153 staff hours through UKG activity form entries for grant reimbursement or special projects.
- Coordinated with the State Auditor's Office/wvOASIS Payroll Team to test and implement the new UKG Pro timekeeping platform for agency supervisors, timekeepers, and employees.
- Developed PUMP ACT accommodation guide to ensure all divisions designate a comfortable space for nursing mothers that is private, clean, and comfortable.
- Provided "Welcome to WVDA" session for new hires to give in-depth information on agency operations, policies, benefits, information technology, and other areas.
- Developed and delivered leadership training to Directors, Deputy Directors, and Assistant Directors.
- Partnered with WV State University to identify internship opportunities for students participating in the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture "From Learning to Leading: Cultivating the Next Generation of Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals Program" NextGen project.
- 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.
- 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.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

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

Some notable accomplishments this year were:

- In addition to routine groundskeeping, maintenance, and custodial activities at the Guthrie complex and other special projects toward keeping the facility modern and functional: Building 2: Relocated several offices and personnel.

Building 12: Constructed and installed a new kitchen area including cabinets, countertops, and lighting.

Building 5: Installed a new metal roof.

Building 11: Installed new metal roof. Interior lab upgrades are on-going, such as drywall, painting, new ceilings, and assisted with the installation of new lab equipment.

Buildings 14 & 15: Relocated generators to provide back-up power.

GATR Site: Coordinated the installation of new perimeter fencing.

- Field office projects:

Moorefield: Renovated labs with new walls, drywall, flooring, lighting, and equipment.

Parkersburg: Installed a mini-split system for the new office area and assisted the temporary employee with ongoing renovations.

Weston: Serviced HVAC and conducted backflow testing on public water.

Inwood: Coordinated installation of new roofing for both the market and office buildings.

Staff assisted Homeland Security in various projects, including response vehicle maintenance and other logistical items.

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 subsequent fiscal years, including Fiscal Year 2024. This is largely due to across-the-board increases for full-time positions funded via General Revenue.

For the most part, 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 the aforementioned 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).

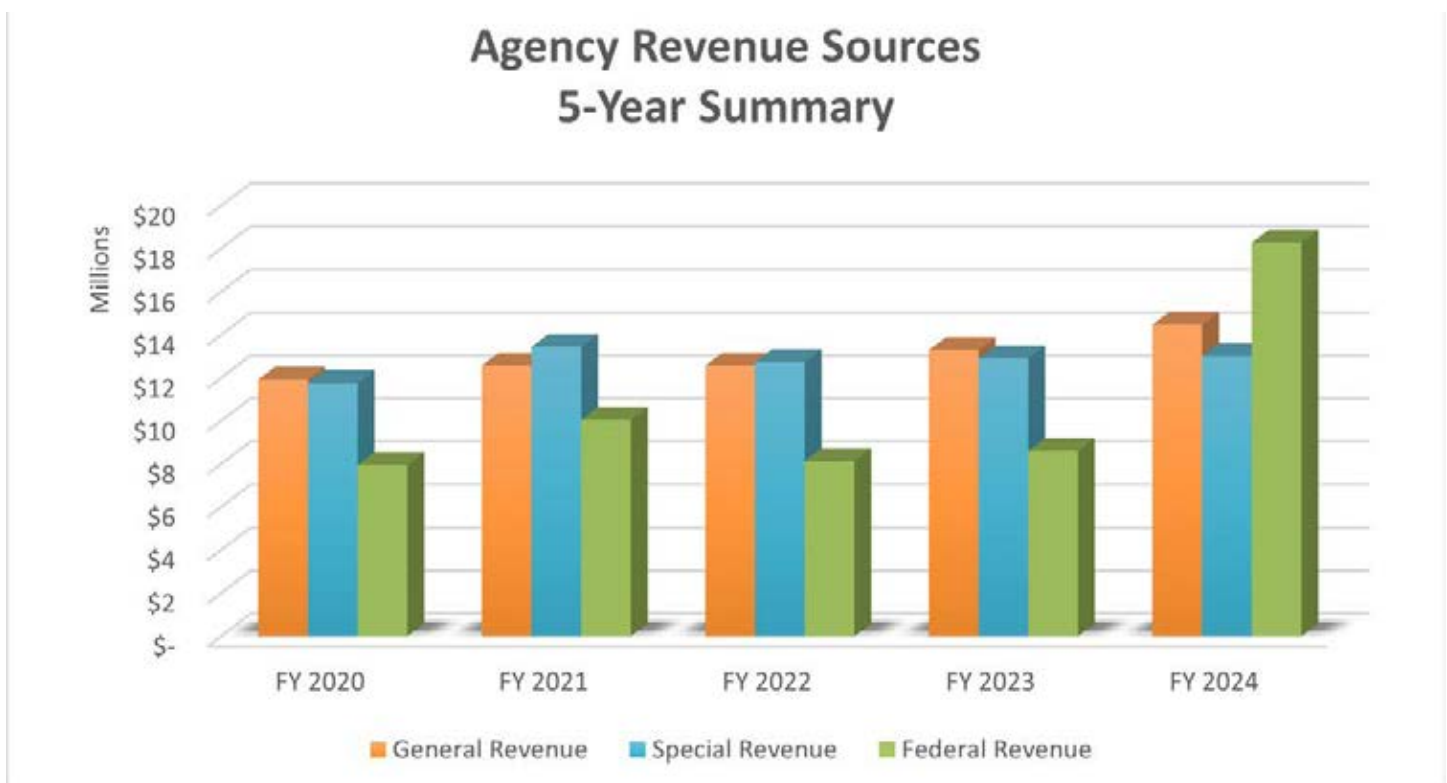
Special Revenue

After a trend of steady Special Revenue increases in various programs in previous years, State Fiscal Year 2024 revenue remained relatively stable compared to the prior fiscal years. In most cases, Special Revenue funding has statutory restrictions to a single program or purpose, to capture revenue and support expenses (including personnel), 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 included graph, WVDA federal revenue continues to increase, most likely due to new programs and funding opportunities (such as Congressionally Directed Spending projects).

As with Special Revenue, 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. While multi-year awards of federal funds are becoming more common, most funding allocations 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.





RURAL REHAB

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 slightly over \$3 million. 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 the WVDA, working with the Agricultural Business Development department staff, and through referrals from WV Farm Service Agency representatives who are working with potential borrowers on agricultural loans in West Virginia. No loans were paid off during the state fiscal year 2024, and no new loans were approved. In order to offer more competitive rates, the loan committee approved a promotion in November of 2023, which is ongoing, to offer an interest rate of the current Wall Street Journal Prime Rate, less one percent, on loans secured by real estate.



A photograph of a green tractor with a large tank and a front loader, parked in a field of harvested crops. In the background, there are other pieces of agricultural machinery, including a smaller tractor and a trailer. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. A green vertical bar is on the left side of the image, and a green arrow points to the right at the bottom left.

AGRICULTURE SERVICES

AG STATS

THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)

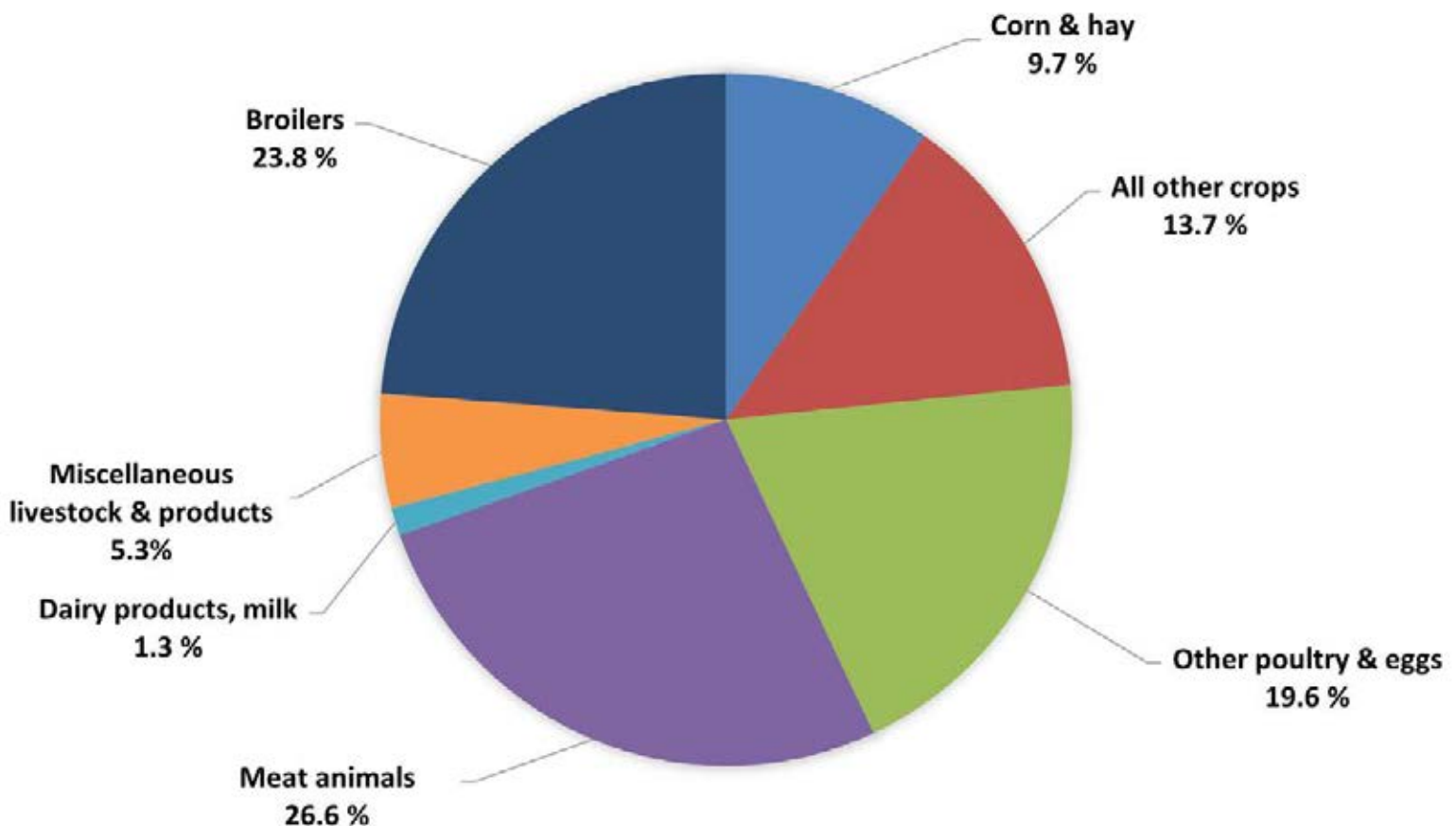
The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is one of 29 agencies under the umbrella of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). NASS is responsible for making the official, unbiased estimates of agriculture in a timely, accurate, and useful manner. We have 850 employees nationwide 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 (WVDA). This relationship with the WVDA 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 was released in February 2024.

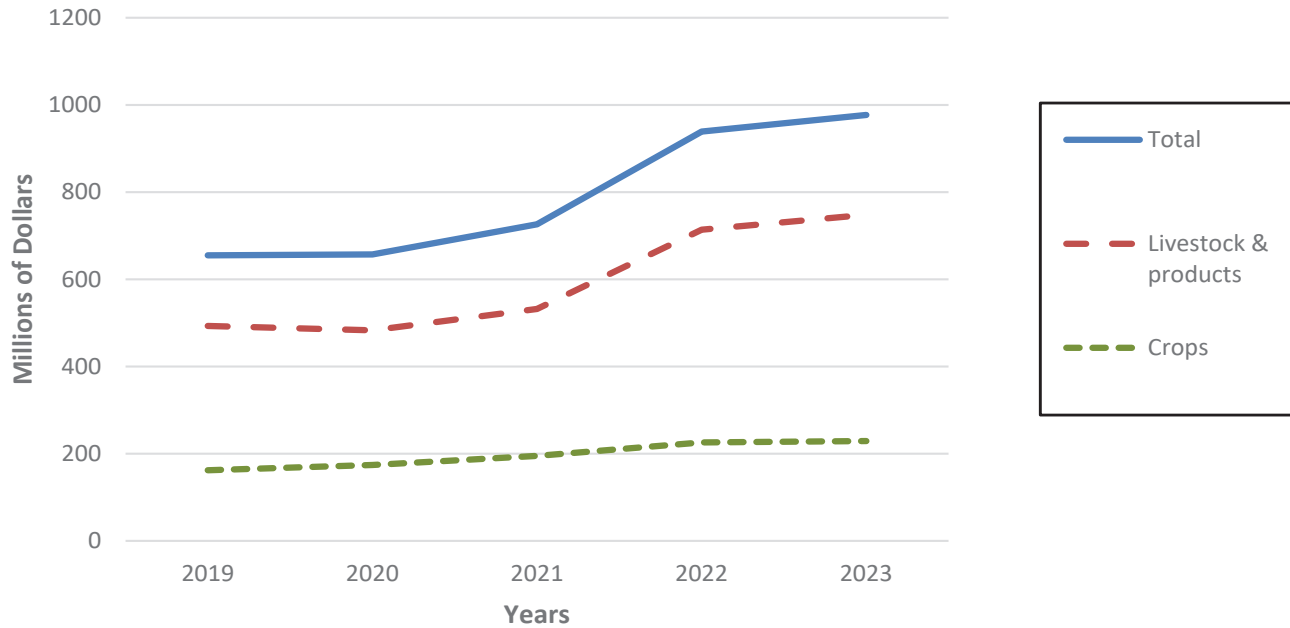
The 2023 cash receipts from farm marketings for all agricultural commodities in West Virginia totaled \$976,785,000, an increase of \$37.8 million from 2022. Receipts from livestock and livestock products accounted for 76.6% of the State total. Cash receipts from crops accounted for 23.4% of the 2023 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 43.4% of the State total. The second leading contributor was cattle and calves which accounted for 26.5% of the total in 2023.

Cash Receipts: Selected Commodities, West Virginia, 2023



Cash Receipts: Major Commodities, West Virginia, 2019 - 2023



West Virginia Cash Receipts from Farm Marketings: 2019-2023 ^{1/}

Commodity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
(000) Dollars					
Livestock and products	492,983	482,913	531,651	713,511	748,119
Meat animals	160,963	174,100	177,087	199,974	259,908
Cattle and calves	160,160	173,431	176,169	198,818	258,566
Hogs	803	669	918	1,156	1,342
Dairy products, Milk	16,192	15,225	13,213	18,323	12,928
Poultry and eggs	266,112	244,614	291,432	443,585	424,018
Broilers	139,433	98,020	137,362	253,555	232,224
Chicken eggs	55,512	56,936	58,331	64,852	71,432
Farm chickens	761	345	273	1,609	1,170
Turkeys	70,406	89,313	95,466	123,569	119,192
Miscellaneous livestock and products ^{2/}	49,715	48,973	49,918	51,629	51,264
Trout	1,116	840	978	1,193	1,167
Honey	946	1,052	1,326	1,613	1,943
Mohair	1	1	1	1	1
Wool	131	105	104	117	112
Other animals and products	47,521	46,975	47,509	48,705	48,041
Crops	161,748	174,406	194,631	225,512	228,666
Food grains (Wheat)	-	-	-	-	-
Feed crops	53,878	60,924	66,529	86,399	94,473
Corn	20,060	22,480	22,467	29,148	27,626
Hay	33,818	38,444	44,063	57,251	66,847
Oil crops (Soybeans)	-	-	-	-	-
Fruits and nuts ^{3/}	-	-	-	-	-
Apples	-	-	-	-	-
Peaches	-	-	-	-	-
All other crops ^{4/}	107,870	113,482	128,102	139,112	134,193
Maple products	-	-	-	-	-
Floriculture	-	-	19,173	17,385	16,742
Mushrooms	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous crops	107,870	113,482	108,929	121,727	117,451
All commodities	654,731	657,319	726,282	939,023	976,785

Cash receipts reflect sales of commodities from farms where produced within a calendar year irrespective of the year of production. Data as of September 5, 2024. 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/>

NOTES



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

COMMISSIONER, KENT A. LEONHARDT