



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER, KENT A. LEONHARDT

ANNUAL REPORT

2025 WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

PUBLISHED JANUARY 2026

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

AMIE MINOR-RICHARD

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

aminor@wvda.us or 304-558-3200

ALAN CLEMANS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

aclemans@wvda.us or 304-558-3200

THOMAS MOUSER

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

tmouser@wvda.us or 304-558-3200

ALLIE SMITH

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

fsmith@wvda.us or 304-558-3200

JAKEB SHUCK, ESQ.

GENERAL COUNSEL

jshuck@wvda.us or 304-558-3200

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. Leckhardt

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	CONTACT US		
6	COMMISSIONER HIGHLIGHTS & INITIATIVES	21	FOOD SAFETY
	West Virginia Grown		United States Food and Drug Administration
	Guthrie Labs		U.S. Department of Agriculture - Country of Origin Labeling
	Food is Medicine		Food and Dairy Testing
	Drought Recovery		Summer Lunches
9	ANIMAL HEALTH		Farmers Markets
	Meat and Poultry Inspection		Eggs
	Captive Cervid/Deer Farming		Produce Safety
	Animal Disease Traceability (ADT)		Manufactured Foods Regulatory - Program Standards
	Animal Health Field Technicians (AHFTS)		Select Plant-Based Derivative Products (Hemp and Kratom Products)
	Livestock Grading/USDA Agriculture - Marketing Service (AMS)	24	AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY PROTECTION
	Apiary Unit		United States Food and Drug - Administration
	Poultry		West Virginia Commercial Feed Law
	Scrapie Program		Fertilizer
	Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratories		Lime
	Swine		Seed
	WV One Health Initiatives		Animal Feed Regulatory Program - Standards
	Veterinary Biologics Requests		Pesticides Control Act
	WV Spay & Neuter Program	27	LABORATORIES
	State Veterinarian Office		Agriculture Materials
15	FARMS		Food and Dairy Testing
	Huttonsville, Pruntytown and Lakin Farms		Hemp
	General McCausland Memorial Farm		Cooperative Agreements
	West Virginia University and - West Virginia State University		ISO Accreditation
17	CEDAR LAKES CONFERENCE CENTER	30	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
	Cedar Lakes Conference Center		Nutrient Management Program
19	EMERGENCY RESPONSE READINESS		Nutrient Management Laboratory
	Homeland Security Unit (HSU)		Soil Testing Laboratories
			Water Quality Monitoring
			Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP)
			Drinking Water Laboratory
			Dairy Testing Laboratory

33 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

42 FOOD COMMODITIES

Food Distribution and Child Nutrition Program
The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

45 AGRICULTURE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Specialty Crop Block Grants
Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program
USDA Farm-to-School Grant
West Virginia Grown
Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)
Rural Development Grant
Veterans and Heroes To Agriculture
Agritourism Industry Poised For Growth

49 ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Fiscal/Human Resources Management
Building and Grounds
Fiscal Position

53 RURAL REHABILITATION LOAN PROGRAM

Applications

55 AGRICULTURE STATISTICS

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)



COMMISSIONER

INITIATIVES

COMMISSIONER HIGHLIGHTS & INITIATIVES

KENT A. LEONHARDT

WEST VIRGINIA GROWN

Established in 1986, West Virginia Grown (WVG) was created to help consumers easily identify and purchase West Virginia-grown or West Virginia-made products. The WVG logo assures buyers that products are produced or processed in the Mountain State using quality ingredients, while also supporting local farmers, producers, manufacturers, agribusinesses, and agritourism operations. Beyond serving as a marketing tool, the program strengthens economic development by keeping each dollar spent on WVG products circulating throughout West Virginia communities.

In recent years, WVDA has focused on expanding public awareness and increasing market opportunities for program members. These efforts have continued to pay off. In FY25, program participation surged to more than 700 members—making WVG one of the state’s most impactful tools for building a resilient local food system. The program remains a cornerstone initiative for connecting consumers to local agriculture and helping producers compete in broader markets.

GUTHRIE LABS

A safe and dependable food supply begins with rigorous testing and high-quality laboratory work, and WVDA’s laboratories play a vital role in protecting West Virginians. Though much of their work happens behind the scenes, the labs directly support the safety of human food, animal feed, fertilizers, plant health, and the broader environment. They also serve as the state’s front line for animal disease surveillance and response.

However, the current laboratory facilities face significant challenges. Originally built nearly six decades ago as a military radar base, the buildings no longer meet modern standards for safety, security, space, or functionality. As the facilities ages, the risk of costly repairs and operational disruptions increases, and outdated infrastructure could eventually jeopardize federal funding tied to agricultural and food safety.

Recognizing these concerns, the WVDA contracted a design and engineering team to evaluate current needs and develop recommendations for a full modernization effort. Plans call for a new, approximately 42,000-square-foot laboratory complex, with an estimated cost of \$80–85 million. A modernized lab will improve efficiency, strengthen disease detection, and enhance response capabilities for foodborne illnesses, livestock health issues, and environmental threats—not only for West Virginia but for the broader region. Updated facilities will also ensure compliance with evolving laboratory standards and support the long-term stability of crucial agricultural safety programs.

FOOD IS MEDICINE

In 2025, WVDA continued expanding partnerships with health organizations to support the state’s emerging Food Is Medicine (FIM) initiative. This effort aims to address nutritional insecurity while improving access to fresh, healthy foods—particularly in rural communities. WVDA has convened meetings with farmers, farmers markets, health care providers, universities, and partner organizations that operate programs aligned with the FIM model.

Through these partnerships, the Department is working to build a coordinated, statewide approach that integrates agriculture and health care. WVDA has also collaborated with federal partners, including the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), to explore long-term strategies that support both better health outcomes and stronger local farm economies. The FIM initiative focuses on creating equitable access to nutritious foods while generating new market opportunities for farmers, orchardists, producers, and ranchers who supply fresh, local products.

DROUGHT RESPONSE

West Virginia has endured a record-setting drought over the last two years, placing significant strain on livestock producers and forage systems. In 2024, WVDA worked closely with the West Virginia Legislature to secure \$10 million from the Governor's Contingency Fund to support livestock grazing operations and address gaps in federal disaster assistance programs. These funds were used to help producers renovate pastures and improve long-term soil resilience.

Eligibility for support was based on Farm Service Agency (FSA) Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) data, allowing the state to streamline payment distribution using existing federal producer records. WVDA partnered with all 14 Conservation Districts to manage enrollment and distribute payments quickly to those most affected. Additionally, the Department organized weekly drought coordination calls with federal and state partners and created a comprehensive "one-stop shop" of drought resources on the WVDA website.





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 fiscal year 2024/25, the inspectors provided daily slaughter and processing inspections at 28 commercial establishments and routine inspections at 29 custom exempt establishments, as well as 412 distributors. Concurrently, inspectors and veterinarians examined 13,064 animals (2,525 cattle, 2,255 swine, 236 sheep, 75 goats, one yak, four bison/buffalo, 6,484 chickens, 1,182 turkey, 143 ducks/geese, and 159 rabbits). As a result, livestock carcasses and carcass parts totaling 58,702 pounds were condemned as being unfit for human consumption and were prevented from entering the food supply. Conversely, MPIB inspected and passed about 2,421,550 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, 441 tests were completed on meat samples, including tests for pathogens such as E. coli, Salmonella, Listeria, and 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 2024-2025, there were 29 Class I (breeding farms) and 10 Class II (hunting preserves) registered as WV facilities. To maintain USDA program standards, 122 tuberculosis and 120 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 161 Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) samples for testing at USDA-approved laboratories.

ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY (ADT)

The Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) program's purpose is to control disease through the ability to trace an animal from its farm of origin to its ultimate endpoint. Animal Health Division has registered approximately 11,723 premises, with 163 new registrations. Under federal regulations, 840 Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags are acceptable forms of official identification. The WVDA distributed 12,730 RFID tags to private veterinarians, livestock producers, and livestock markets. 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 (AHFT)

Over 108,000 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 38 honor flock (sheep) and 64 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 31,124 head of cattle were graded in-barn and for board sales at WV livestock markets by USDAAMS certified livestock graders. Livestock graders also performed 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 October 2025, a total of 1,147 apiarists registered 15,364 colonies. While the number of beekeepers remained relatively the same, as compared to last year's report, the total number of colonies has increased by 8.9%. Beekeepers in West Virginia produced a self-reported 288,719 pounds of honey during the 2024 honey production season, which represents a decrease compared to 2023 production (321,447 pounds) of approximately 10%. 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 \$389.2 million annual value of production for 2024 (source: USDA NASS 2024 WV Agricultural Annual Statistics Website). 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 2024, broiler production totaled 83.1 million and turkeys raised in WV totaled 3.9 million (source: USDA NASS 2024 WV Agricultural Annual Statistics Website).

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 1930s 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 195,813 tests during FY 2024-25. 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 to a Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (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. The Guthrie Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory conducted 10,050 tests during FY 2024-25 with focus on livestock regulatory program diseases including 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 via distributing brochures, one-on-one discussions, and sharing information on social media. Staff have participated in monthly SHIP meetings and 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 hosted a Certified Swine Sample Collector (CSSC) training course and certified eight WVDA Animal Health Technicians, which allows them 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. In the fall of 2025, agencies decided to change to a monthly One Health call moving forward. 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.

Due to funding provided by the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) and the American Rescue Plan Act, WVDA hosted a One Health Coordination and Communication Plan Development Workshop in October 2024. A WVDA One Health Plan was developed after the workshop. In February 2025, the Mountain State Mayhem One Health Tabletop Exercise was conducted to exercise the drafted plan. Multiple state agencies, WVU Extension, and federal partners participated in the workshop and tabletop exercise. This plan can be used by WVDA to coordinate with multiple state agencies and One Health partners in the event of a One Health emergency. In May 2025, WVDA collaborated with WVU Extension and Maryland Department of Health on a West Virginia Healthy Fairs Symposium which served to educate on zoonotic diseases.

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 2024, we had a total of 46 requests/approvals. So far in 2025, we have had 63 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, other conditional or experimental use authorized vaccines, and vaccines for Avian Metapneumovirus and Infectious Laryngotracheitis. The biologic companies are required to send quarterly sale reports and adverse event reports.

WV SPAY AND NEUTER PROGRAM

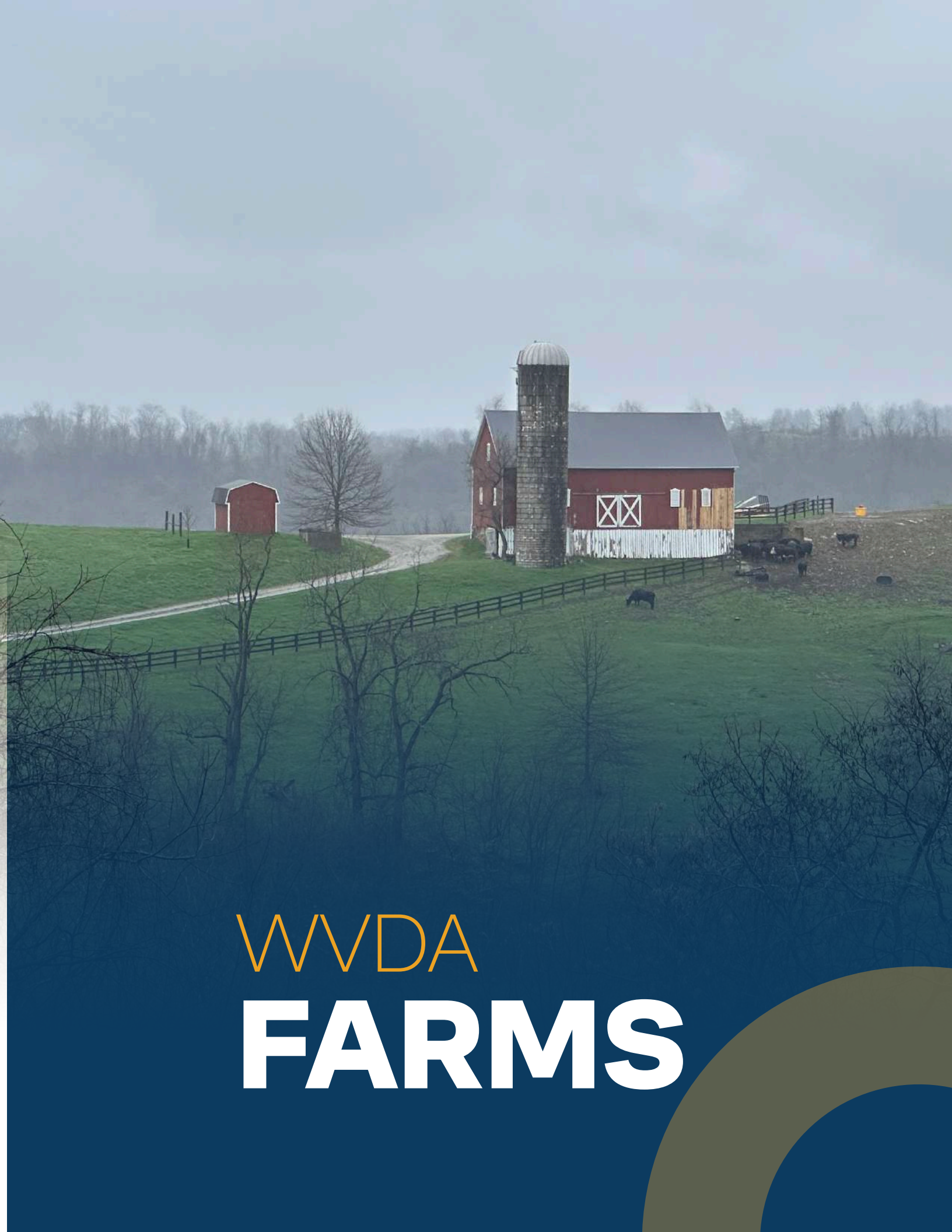
The West Virginia Spay Neuter Program (WVSNP) has a presence in 53 of 55 counties. The number of grantees increased to 84 which were awarded \$1,297,500, a 13% increase compared to the previous year. The Federation of Humane Organizations of West Virginia made this possible by donating \$450,000 to the WVSNP fund via the Mug Z Moo grant for the second year in a row. Grantees matched an additional

\$312,604.94 and reported 23,405 miles driven to surgeries, an in-kind match at government mileage rates. Seventeen thousand, five-hundred and thirty-seven surgical alterations were performed, consisting of 7,926 felines, 5,371 community cat designated felines, and 4,240 canines. The WVSNP advisory committee was 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, and 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 in a 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 a state or federal certified veterinarian to 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 in 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 2002-25 outbreak, as well as cooperation with WV livestock markets, the Livestock market Association of America (LMA), WVU and WV State Extension, WVMA, 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 the 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 WVDA is comprised of just under 10,000 acres in three locations. The Huttonsville farm is the most diverse having a cow/calf herd; backgrounding 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 a 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, cattle have been fed in our enclosed feedlot. This facility is now being used to background our calves to 900 pounds, then sending the calves to a feed yard in Kansas. to develop our replacement heifers and backgrounding our calves.

In FY25, the WVDA incorporated a more robust rotational grazing program, utilizing pastures more effectively during the last two drought years. Corn acres planted this year totaled 120 acres and 30 acres of forage beans were added as an additional protein source and natural weed control. The beans were chopped in the field and bagged as silage. Corn will be chopped and stored in bags and in a silo. 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. Forage builder, a high protein grass, was added as another new crop and was 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 2026.

GENERAL MCCAUSLAND MEMORIAL FARM

The General John 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.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AND WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

In FY25, the WVDA farms worked in cooperation with West Virginia University's (WVU) Dr. Matt Wilson and Jerry Yates by supplying cattle for studies regarding feed and water intake to determine which 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, Kansas, by doing the same work and relating it to carcass quality. This will be a project that will take several years to complete to collect enough data. The information collected will be the first of its kind. Currently, there are 100-plus 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 (FY26). WVU also plans to evaluate our replacement heifers during the first half of 2026, 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 (WVSU) 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 serve as a vital hub for community engagement, professional development, and regional tourism. In FY25, we hosted a record number of events, expanded our partnerships, and made strategic improvements to our facilities, all while maintaining our commitment to excellence and hospitality. With recent renovations and ongoing upgrades throughout the facility, Cedar Lakes is not just preserving its heritage, it is investing in the future.

Facility Improvements

- Installed one of 43 Department of Tourism Almost Heaven swings. Through the excellent partnership with the Ripley CVB, Cedar Lakes became one of the states' scenic destinations and tourism attractions.
- Completed renovations of the Main Lodge – three remaining dorms and bathrooms.
- Completed renovations of Mountaineer Lodge.
- Added a kitchenette to Assembly Hall.
- Painted the exterior of the Chapel, Main Lodge, and Records Room.
- Cleaned all walking trails and powerline rights-of-way.
- Completed major renovations to the pool by repairing water lines and replacing the pump.

Grant Recipient

- Jackson County Commission and Cedar Lakes Foundation – funding for new flooring for Holt Lodge.
- Jackson County Community Foundation and Cedar Lakes Foundation – funding for new musical instruments at the playground.
- Delegate Steve Westfall – funding for new kitchenette at Assembly Hall.
- Constellium Cares – funding for new patio furniture for Holt Lodge.

Goals for FY26

- Launch new website
- Expand marketing to attract regional and national conferences and retreats
- Continue facility upgrades with focus on sustainability
- Continue internal upgrades to sewer plant while actively seeking funding for the new plant

“Cedar Lakes has been a cornerstone of educational retreats and community gatherings in West Virginia for over 70 years. Its legacy continues to inspire generations of learners and leaders.” – WV MetroNews



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 disasters, 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 under Animal Health's federal grant funding for emergency preparedness.
- Continue to refine ICS introductory curriculum for new employee onboarding to introduce new staff to ICS concepts.
- Continue to work on improvement plan for staging and use of National Veterinary Stockpile materials and supplies.
- Chair WVDA Safety Committee which assists with development and implementation of various safety projects.
- Work with WV Intelligence Fusion Center and serve as a Fusion Liaison Officer (FLO).
- Manage assets and consumable equipment required for emergency response readiness.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.



FOOD
SAFETY

FOOD SAFETY

In FY25, WVDA Regulatory officers traveled over 391,886 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 FY2025, 30 initial reviews and three follow-up review inspections across the state were conducted that generated \$18,600.

FOOD AND DAIRY TESTING

Several state laws promulgate the inspection and collection of dairy samples for analysis. Soft-service ice cream samples were collected after inspection of manufacturing sites within West Virginia and tested for sanitary conditions. WVDA issued 653 Frozen Dessert Permits 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 46 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 all farmers markets in the state. They have provided inspections, registration, technical assistance, and outreach and education to markets and vendors. During the past year, our Farmers Market Coordinator has registered 341 markets. There were 50 market inspections completed, with 150 registered vendor permits and three vendor inspections at farmers markets and 26 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 45 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 nine 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.
- Three Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) grower trainings.
- Two “Writing Your Food Safety Plan” trainings.
- Exceeded the 2025 target for outreach and education goals.
- All covered farms inspected in 2024-2025.
- Farm inventory verification surpassed the Y3, Y4, Y5, and Y6 milestones for the current five-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)

The Select Plant-Based Derivative (Hemp and Kratom Products) rules were established by the legislature to ensure safe hemp and kratom products and to provide consumer protection standards for all products sold in West Virginia. The rule applies to all hemp and kratom products, regardless of where they are manufactured. The WVDA began registering kratom products in FY25.

During the reporting period, 561 inspections were completed across all 55 counties. There are currently 1,580 registered retailers and 3,138 registered products, along with 160 registered manufacturers. A total of 5,351 illegal products were confiscated from 113 locations, and 17 permits were revoked. Total program revenue reached \$992,940.



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 119 non-medicated feed samples, seven medicated feed samples, and 13 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 101 inspections of feed manufacturers and retailers across the state. Thirty-two fertilizer violations with no embargoes were issued for non-registration or non-compliance labels

Registration for feed products:

- Commercial feed guarantor – 363 companies (\$181,000).
- Large package pet food (over 10 lb.) – 2,422 products \$242,200 generated).
- Small package pet food – 12,459 products (\$934,425 generated).
- Specialty pet food (all weights) – 1,201 products (\$48,040 generated).
- Commercial feed manufacturing permits – 50 companies (\$2,500 generated).
- Commercial feed distributing permits – 206 companies (\$6,180 generated).
- Commercial feed tonnage – 197,713 tons (\$106,434 generated).

All feed, pet food, lime, and fertilizer products must be registered with WVDA before it can be sold into commerce in West Virginia. 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 FY2025, 411 fertilizer samples were collected resulting in four violations.

A total of 42,006 tons of fertilizer were reported sold in West Virginia. There were 100 registered fertilizer manufacturers, as well as 158 companies registering 793 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 those firms prior to issuing a permit.

LIME

Under the Agricultural Liming Materials Law, there were zero violations and fines. There were 39 lime manufacturers registered selling lime products with 54,027 tons sold in West Virginia. WVDA has nine licensed lime distributors registered in West Virginia, and the program revenue for the fiscal year is \$13,950.

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 101 seed facility inspections in which they issued four embargoes this past year. There were 1,181 tons of seed potatoes sold in the state. There were no lots of seed potatoes embargoed. One hundred and sixty-nine seedsmen were registered in FY25, and 309 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 non-agricultural 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 FY25, the Agriculture Health and Safety Coordinator provided training for 114 agriculture workers, 53 agriculture handlers, and two train the trainers.

In FY25, WVDA's five Pesticide Regulatory Officers conducted 488 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 14,615 pesticides registered for use in the state.

The Pesticide Regulatory Programs registered 1,672 commercial and public applicators along with 2,481 registered technicians. There were 398 licensed pesticide application businesses registered.



WVDA

LABORATORIES

LABORATORIES

AGRICULTURE MATERIALS

The agricultural materials laboratory analyzes a variety of agricultural products. These products include animal feed, pet food, pet and animal treats, forage, silage, fertilizer, liming material, and soil amendments. The majority of samples received are official regulatory samples taken by WVDA inspectors. The laboratory also receives service samples submitted by individuals throughout the state. The laboratory received 481 samples of animal feed, pet food, and forage products in FY25 and analyzed 404 samples of animal feed, pet food, and forage products in FY25. 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 394 samples in FY25 and analyzed 339 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 FY25, the laboratory received 98 samples for germination, purity, noxious weeds, prohibited materials, filth, and ingredient identification and analyzed 81 total samples. 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 2,906 frozen desserts and dairy product samples for coliform bacterial counts and standard plate counts. Of those samples, 617 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 176 samples as part of the Laboratory Flexible Funding Model (LFFM) Cooperative Agreement. The samples included CoQ10 dietary supplements, canned fruit, spices, and dried fruits and vegetables. They were analyzed for the presence of sulfites, CoQ10, 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 577 samples were analyzed by the laboratory with 13 samples testing positive. The laboratory also analyzed an additional 539 samples as part of the Laboratory Flexible Funding Model (LFFM) Cooperative Agreement. These samples included enoki mushrooms, queso fresco cheese, soft cheeses, tahini, leafy greens, ice cream mix, and RTE produce.

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 FY25, the laboratory received 123 samples for Total $\Delta 9$ -THC analysis. 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. In FY26, the WVDA will analyze hemp products for additional cannabinoids, toxic metals, pesticides, and other quality parameters.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

During the fall of 2020, the WVDA started the Laboratory Flexible Funding Model (LFFM) Cooperative Agreement. This was 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 allowed the WVDA to update its equipment, expand its testing scope, and continue to improve the overall quality of the laboratory.

In year five, the WVDA received \$700,000. A variety of commodities were analyzed, including animal and pet food, enoki mushrooms, tahini, queso fresco cheese, soft cheese, ice cream, leafy greens, RTE produce, dried fruits and vegetables, canned fruit, spices, dietary supplements, and various other products. These products were analyzed for toxic metals, nutritional metals, mycotoxins, prohibited materials, sulfites, CoQ10, Salmonella spp., Listeria monocytogenes, and E. coli 0157:H7.

ISO ACCREDITATION

In FY25, 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 Programs and Laboratories, located in the Moorefield Regional Agricultural Complex, specialize in the collection and analysis of surface water, soil, poultry litter and manure, drinking water, and dairy products. 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 191 farmers, collected 1,575 soil samples, 29 manure/litter samples, and completed 179 nutrient management plans on 34,373 acres.

The majority of these samples were collected and analyzed to serve in the creation of nutrient management plans which enable farmers to maximize crop yields while minimizing the impact of land applications on surface waters. Nutrient Management Specialists collect samples every three years 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.

WVDA also worked with the USDA NRCS under a partnership agreement to hire three Nutrient Management Specialists to work in the Ohio River Basin. These employees are based in USDA Offices in Mount Clare, Lewisburg, and Point Pleasant, WV.

The Nutrient Management Program 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).

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT LABORATORY

WVDA's Nutrient Management Laboratory received 93 poultry litter/manure samples resulting in 1,612 analyses. The WVDA Nutrient Management Laboratory at Moorefield analyzes manure samples for nutrient content as a service to agricultural producers as a component of their nutrient management plan.

SOIL TESTING LABORATORIES

WVDA's soil laboratory received 2,878 soil samples resulting in 8,634 analyses. This laboratory was established in January 2016 to assist WVDA's Nutrient Management Specialists 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 FY25, WVDA continued water quality monitoring 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
- Two times per month – Lost River and Cacapon Rivers

- Once per month – New Creek, Lunice Creek, Mill Creek, 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 1,808 water samples that were collected from these streams resulted in 22,565 analyses. Samples were analyzed by the Environmental Technician and Environmental Laboratory for the following parameters: pH, conductivity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, nitrate, 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's streams and the Chesapeake Bay. WVDA also continues involvement in the Chesapeake Bay Agriculture Workgroup and the Principals' Staff Committee.

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 Chesapeake Bay Watershed to meet and exceed these goals.

DRINKING WATER LABORATORY

WVDA's drinking water laboratory received 932 samples resulting in 2,063 analyses. The WVDA supports drinking water safety through its environmental laboratories, working in partnership with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR). This partnership is designed to improve local access for residents, businesses, and municipalities needing to test their drinking water.

DAIRY TESTING LABORATORY (MOOREFIELD)

WVDA's Dairy Testing Laboratory received 534 soft serve ice cream samples resulting in 964 analyses.

Several state laws promulgate the inspection and collection of dairy samples for analysis. Soft-service ice cream samples are collected after inspection of manufacturing sites within West Virginia and tested for sanitary conditions.



FOREST HEALTH &
PLANT INDUSTRIES

FOREST HEALTH AND PLANT INDUSTRIES

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

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) SUPPORT

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

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

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 and Field Maps to use in the field in preparation for a busy spongy moth defoliation season.
- 68,839 acres of spongy moth defoliation and 14,223 acres of linden looper defoliation were mapped by field staff using DMSM.
- Administered 20 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 200 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 and HiForm to identify areas of disturbance in the tree canopy cover for the entire state of West Virginia.
- Extracted ForWarn and HiForm data to perform complex data analyses to identify areas for field staff to ground survey.
- Sent out hundreds of mapped areas 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 on staff computers, installed and updated tablet applications, kept tablet inventory up to date.
- New computers were purchased to allow staff to exclusively use ArcGIS Pro.

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, Surveys, and Treatments:

- Traps were set at 13 sites in nine 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 nine sites in six counties for five insect pests and visual surveys were conducted for two insect pests 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) and *Lycorma delicatula* (spotted lanternfly). No positives were discovered.
- Traps were set at 15 sites in 13 counties for three 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), as well as visual surveys for *Lycorma delicatula* (spotted lanternfly). An Oak inventory was also conducted at each of the 15 sites and data was recorded for 602 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 five counties for two insect pests and visual surveys were conducted for one insect pest as part of a Small Grains Commodity Survey. Surveys were conducted for *Helicoverpa armigera* (old world bollworm) and *Spodoptera littoralis* (Egyptian cottonworm), as well as visual surveys for *Diabrotica speciosa* (Cucurbit beetle). No positives were discovered
- Traps were set at eight sites in two 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 36 sites in 20 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.
- Staff surveyed 24 nurseries/nursery dealers in 17 counties for Sudden Oak Death (*Phytophthora ramorum*) collecting 239 foliage samples. All samples were negative.
- Visual surveys were conducted for the Spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) (SLF) in all surveys.
- All green plastic bucket traps were set at 24 sites in 14 counties for *Cydalima perspectalis* (Box Tree Moth) by WVDA staff. An additional 10 traps were set by USDA APHIS in Jefferson and Morgan counties. Positives were confirmed in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties.
- Visual surveys were conducted for Box Tree Moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*) (BTM) at all 24 trap sites and in additional areas around the state.
- 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 Marion, Mercer, McDowell, and Preston counties. Delimiting surveys were conducted in an effort to determine extent of the infestations.
- WVDA staff have worked alongside USDA during SLF treatment and eradication efforts.
- WVDA staff surveyed multiple potential release sites for biological control of Knotweed and came up with a list of 10 adequate release sites.
- WVDA staff released knotweed biological control *A. itadori* at three sites from the adequate sites previously surveyed.
- WVDA staff constructed a psyllid rearing facility and collected the first approximately 450 psyllids for release to bolster the populations at two of the previous release sites.

Outreach:

- 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.
- A total of 114 SLF informational sheets were sent to nurseries/nursery dealers throughout the state.
- Approximately 550 Tree-of-Heaven Removal and/or SLF informational packets were given to state agencies and private businesses throughout the state.
- A total of 114 BTM informational mailings were sent to nurseries/nurser dealers throughout the state of West Virginia.

Information was distributed to multiple West Virginia agencies including but not limited to 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 Society of American Foresters, WV Drinking Water Forum, WV Department of Highways, WV Christmas Tree Growers Association, WV Division of Forestry, WV Nursery & Landscape Association, and multiple WV Master Naturalist Chapters.

Presentations and information on various invasive pests were given at multiple county fairs, festivals, and career fairs throughout the state.

WVDA updated SLF information on 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.

WVDA added new BTM information on their website and posted to social media encouraging any suspect positives to be reported to bugbusters@wvda.us.

More than 1,000 handheld fans with information on SLF were distributed at various locations and events throughout West Virginia.

Staff provided a variety of other outreach handout materials to several West Virginia State Park Nature Centers to hand out to visitors.

PLANT PEST REGULATORY PROGRAM (PPRP)

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

- Registered 116 nurseries and 327 nursery dealerships and conducted 139 nursery and/or dealer inspections, resulting in the stop-sale of 55 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 Home Depot (Hurricane location)
- Conducted 550 inspections and issued 1,328 USDA-APHIS-PPQ phytosanitary certificates for 2,422 shipping containers covering international log and lumber shipments.
- Visited 33 sites to investigate the movement of articles capable of transporting the *Lymantria dispar* life stages into uninfested areas.
- Collected 239 leaf samples and visited 25 nurseries or nursery dealers in 17 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.

INDUSTRIAL HEMP

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

63 full licenses to grow or process industrial hemp were issued for the 2025 growing season.

1. 33 varieties of industrial hemp were grown.
2. 11 acres were planted.
3. 117 lbs. of fiber.
4. 1,588 lbs. of flower material.
5. 1,100 lbs. of biomass or compost material.
6. Minor amounts of propagative material. (Seed for planting)

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 located near the rivers safe from the organism's disturbance, as well as adverse bites. 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 2025.
- Conducted nine 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 identified pests 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 124 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 58 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 74 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 24 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 148 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 276 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 19 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 23 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 in Boone, Fayette, Greenbrier, Mason, Tucker, and Wood Counties. Garlic mustard was found on all surveyed counties.
- Conducted visual detection surveys for the invasive knotweeds: Giant knotweed (GK), *Reynoutria sachalinensis*, Japanese knotweed (JK), *Reynoutria japonica*, and Bohemian knotweed (BK), *Reynoutria x bohemica* for the Noxious Weeds Biocontrol Survey Program in Boone, Fayette, Kanawha, Mason, Pleasants, and Raleigh Counties. All three species were found distributed as follows: BK: Boone and Pleasants; GK: Boone, Fayette, Kanawha, Mason, and Pleasants Counties; JK: Boone, Kanawha, Mason, Pleasants, and Raleigh Counties.
- Provided insect museum information requests, specimen loans, specialized insect identifications, and other research related services to the following institutions: University of Delaware, Clemson University, Museum of Southeastern Biology, Burpee Museum of Natural History, Environmental Solutions and Innovations, WV Department of Natural Resources, WVDA personnel, and online BugGuide.net taxonomic group.
- Handled 1,385 pest calls/emails, 669 pest specimens, and six information requests. All pest specimen information was entered into the National Plant Diagnostic Network database. Provided four youth and six adult educational programs.

FOREST HEALTH PROTECTION PROGRAMS (FHP)

Forest Insect and Disease Survey and Detection Programs

- Conducted statewide beech leaf disease (BLD) surveys and established eight long-term monitoring plots in areas with abundant beech resources. 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 then found in the summer of 2023 in Ohio County and in Jefferson County at Harpers Ferry National Park in 2025.
- Monitored Beech Bark Disease resistant orchard in Parsons, West Virginia. The trees remain free of both BBD and Beech Leaf Disease and will be treated with polyphosphate 30 next year as a preventative measure to ensure the health of this valuable resource.
- 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 1,578 hemlock trees at four different sites, and treatments will continue throughout the fall and next spring.
- Participated in a biological predator study with Virginia Tech and collected samples at three sites in the state.
- 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 oaks 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.

- All five long term monitoring plots were monitored and re-measured for oak decline in Pocahontas, Greenbrier, Monongalia, and Randolph counties.
- Elm zigzag sawfly surveys were conducted in the northern panhandle and northcentral part of the state and was found in Monongalia County. No new county detections at this time.
- Visual surveys for Laurel Wilt symptoms were conducted on sassafras.
- Yellow poplar weevil and tulip tree scale were reported across the state.

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 17, 2025, spotted lanternfly is found in 18 of West Virginia's 55 counties. These counties are Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Hampshire, Mineral, Hardy, Grant, Taylor, Harrison, Marion, Hancock, Monongalia, Marshall, Ohio, Brooke, Wood, McDowell, and Mercer. 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 2025, 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 has yet to be confirmed. The WVDA is working to remove small tree-of-heaven by means of herbicide application and treats large tree-of-heaven with a systemic insecticide. A contact insecticide is used in appropriate 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 as high-traffic business parks, hospitals, railways, etc. WVDA Staff also complete visual surveys across the state to determine if the insect is present in areas not known to be infested. WVDA staff work to educate and provide outreach materials to the people of West Virginia so that West Virginians are informed of the pest and proper control strategies to mitigate spotted lanternfly infestations and spread.

2025 Program Accomplishments:

- WVDA staff have conducted over 200 visual surveys for spotted lanternfly across West Virginia.
- Approximately 30 spotted lanternfly traps have been installed during the 2025 field season by WVDA Staff across West Virginia. These traps are to be monitored every two weeks.
- Over 1,200 acres of tree-of-heaven have been treated for spotted lanternfly as of 9/17/2025.
- Five 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 2025.
- Between 1/1/2024 and 9/17/2024, WVDA staff have participated in 18 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 (LDCS) and Slow the Spread (STS) Programs, both of which are carried out in cooperation with the USDA-FS. Under the LDCS Program umbrella with the USDA-FS, the WVDA conducts the Cooperative State-County-Landowner (CSCL) Program in the generally infested areas 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; we 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 and Google Earth Engine HiForm App were used to determine Forest Disturbance areas. Ground visits were made to the disturbance areas, and a total of 68,839 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, 465 acres; Hampshire, 15,368 acres; Hardy 48,048 acres; Mineral, 3,568 acres; and Morgan, 1,390 acres.
- Ground surveyed 136,108 acres of private and state lands in West Virginia signed up by landowners and managers.
- Completed 1,810 1/40-acre plot spongy moth egg mass density surveys and the egg mass viability study.
- Visited 4,974 landowners for spongy moth presence.
- Aerial treatments were conducted on 17,143 acres in Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, and Morgan Counties. Foray 48B treatment was selected by landowners on 1,000 acres, and Mimic 2LV was selected on 16,143 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 3,856 gypsy moth traps covering 9,618,566 acres.
- All traps have been removed from the field, and 37,708 male gypsy moths have been caught. This is a 1.1% increase from the 32,899 moths caught in 2024.
- 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 8,690 trap site visits.
- Gave presentations 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 the 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 \$12.1 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 include 725 public and private schools, 40 child and adult care programs, and 32 summer feeding programs which are held in county schools, community camps, WVU Extension, and 4-H programs.

The Food Distribution Program also oversees The Emergency Food Assistance Program (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 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 delivers more than \$5 million of free food to the food banks each year. The CSFP currently has a caseload of 9,827 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 FY25, West Virginia received a TEFAP entitlement of \$2,242,946 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 2,105,027 lbs. of food to be purchased and brought into West Virginia for citizens in need. In addition to this entitlement value, the state received \$5,657,211 worth of BONUS USDA commodities that were offered to the state in the amount of 4,588,432 lbs. Along with the TEFAP program and the Bonus Commodities, West Virginia also received USDA commodities from the Commodity Credit Corporation (TEFAP CCC) at a value of \$1,346,144 and totaling 904,050 lbs.

During FY25, WVDA passed through \$1,008,421 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 \$322,998.67 in administrative funding was passed through to the food banks during this time, for expenses associated with TEFAP CCC commodities, and \$19,320 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.

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

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 9,827 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 by the request of each foodbank as to the number of elderly they serve and can efficiently deliver each supplemental box to per month.

During FFY25, WVDA passed through \$986,897 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. The USDA Food and Nutrition Service provided CSFP CCC funding from the Commodity Credit Corporation to help alleviate supply chain disruption issues for CSFP commodities from contracted national multi-food warehouses. During SFY25, WVDA passed through \$489,329 to the state's two food banks to be used to purchase commodities for CSFP boxes with this funding. During SFY25, WVDA passed through \$2,245,202 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 \$645,045 in funding during FFY25 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

The WVDA Business Development Division works to foster economic growth, consumer confidence, and long-term sustainability within West Virginia's agricultural industry. Through innovative solutions, dedicated resources, and strong partnerships, the division connects agribusinesses with market opportunities, increases consumer awareness of West Virginia agriculture, supports the next generation of producers, and promotes profitable agricultural business development across the state.

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT

WVDA awarded \$300,906.30 in FY25 Specialty Crop Block Grants Program Farm Bill funding to eight projects. A few of the projects awarded included funding for community-based honey extraction equipment and specialty cut flowers.

SENIOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program certified 176 farmers to grow and provide fresh fruits and vegetables to eligible senior citizens. A total of 17,800 booklets, each worth \$50, were sent to centers for distribution to eligible seniors. The total impact for the State of West Virginia was over \$7 million.

USDA FARM-TO-SCHOOL GRANT

WVDA was awarded \$112,106 in FY23 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 hosting a Farm to School Summit. WVDA worked closely with the West Virginia Department of Education to continue to support comprehensive farm to child nutrition programming, including local procurement and agricultural education. Funding was cancelled for the FY25 Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant Program. WVDA will be making application for the FY26 funding to continue Farm to School efforts, as well as expanding initiatives.

WEST VIRGINIA GROWN

The state's branding program for farm and food products that grow, sell, serve, and support local products continued to expand. Membership includes 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. As of June 30, 2025, a total of 539 producers, 51 retail partners, and 28 support partners were WV Grown members. As a member, they can enjoy the following resources: use of the popular WV Grown logo; inclusion in the WV Grown Directory updated annually; inclusion in special events, such as the Winter Blues Farmers Market and the Country Store at the State Fair of West Virginia; and features in the many media outlets administered by WVDA.



RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (RFSI)

WVDA announced \$3,340,273 in grant awards for 11 projects through the RFSI grant program, five Infrastructure Grants, and six Equipment Grants, to build resilience across the middle-of-the supply-chain while strengthening local and regional food systems. Middle-of-the-supply-chain activities include processing, aggregation, and/or distribution of targeted agricultural products.

Through the RFSI program, and in addition to the Infrastructure Grant funding, WVDA supports supply chain coordination and provides technical assistance to farmers and food businesses operating in processing, aggregation and distribution—all critical activities to support access to more and better markets for farmers.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT - MEAT AND PRODUCE INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRAINING INITIATIVE

WVDA was awarded \$156,594 in Rural Business Development Grant funds for the Meat and Produce Infrastructure and Training Initiative. This initiative delivered post-harvest handling education and provided critical infrastructure, such as coolbots, for on-farm cold storage for fruit and vegetable producers and chest freezers for protein producers, both allowing for increased on-farm capacity and increased volume of product to market. Through this expansion, WVDA trained farmers in practical implementation of post-harvest handling practices and offered technical assistance on reaching additional markets through niche product production. These efforts enhanced the ability of West Virginia small farmers to reach more diverse markets and helped increase niche products through decreased perishability, making agriculture a more sustainable and viable economic force across the state.

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, approximately 580 members received opportunities for education, training, scholarships, funding, and mentorships spanning various topics and skill levels.



The Veterans & Heroes to Agriculture Grant Program (VHAGP) hosted its third pitch competition at Cedar Lakes Conference Center. Five individuals were awarded funding: Grandma T's Christmas Trees, \$4,850; Aaron Garrison \$8,300; Sky Gwinn, \$10,000; Elizabeth Hernandez, \$4,850; and Mark Stewart, \$5,000. Additionally, WVDA provided many scholarships to individuals across the state looking to grow their knowledge.

The Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture program was proud to partner with the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Clarksburg, to assist with the Whole Health Program, which included seasonal Whole Health Markets at the VA; WVU Research Corporation, on the meet the Forester Project; Gold Star Mothers and Toyota Motors Manufacturing West Virginia, on the dedication of the Gold Star Mother's Orchard to remember post 9/11 veterans; Mission Beehive, Inc., in providing eight-week entry level beekeeping classes; Stars & Stripes Therapeutic Equine Center, on a six-week mindfulness training; Mountain State Co-Hop, providing needed grant funding; as well as many others.

To further expand the program, Commissioner Leonhardt provided the first exemption for an individual to join the Veterans & Heroes to Agriculture Program who was not a veteran, firefighter, law enforcement, emergency services personnel, or first responder. This individual was a retired civilian member of the Department of Army, with two deployments.

Through a partnership with the Farmer Veteran Coalition (Homegrown by Heroes) and WV Grown, veteran members are eligible to use the blended mark on their products, with several members now using the logo.

Veterans & Heroes continuously seeks to 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 over the past four years, with more than 300 agritourism operators across the Mountain State. Several communities supported 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 developing farms. More producer education opportunities are coming in the next fiscal year.

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



West Virginia has over **250** Agritourism Destinations!





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 grant management functions of the WVDA and related agencies. For the State Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025, the Fiscal Management section processed expenditure transactions totaling \$52 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 10,806 P-card transactions, totaling more than \$4.5 million.
- Performed fiscal management and oversight monitoring for a portfolio of \$32.2 million in federal funding (total programs obligated to agency as of June 30, 2025).
- Tracked 189,190 staff hours through UKG activity form entries for grant reimbursement or special projects.
- Worked with the Executive Division to issue contract and process payments to apple orchardists to buy excess apple inventory to donate to local schools and hunger-fighting non-profits such as Facing Hunger Foodbank and Mountaineer Foodbank.
- 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 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, other special projects were conducted toward keeping the facility modern and functional:
- Worked with laboratory staff to develop a plan to renovate Guthrie Agricultural Center space to be used for multipurpose Animal Health and Regulatory lab space.
- Worked with veterinarians and laboratory staff to continue renovations at the Moorefield Animal Health Laboratory to support National Animal Health Laboratory Network participation.
- Provided maintenance and technical support in response to maintenance needs at WVDA field locations.

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 FY25. 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 in various programs in previous years, FY25 revenue increased over prior fiscal years due to a one-time increase from the Governor's Civil Contingency Fund to support the apple industry and full implementation of the hemp and kratom program. 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.

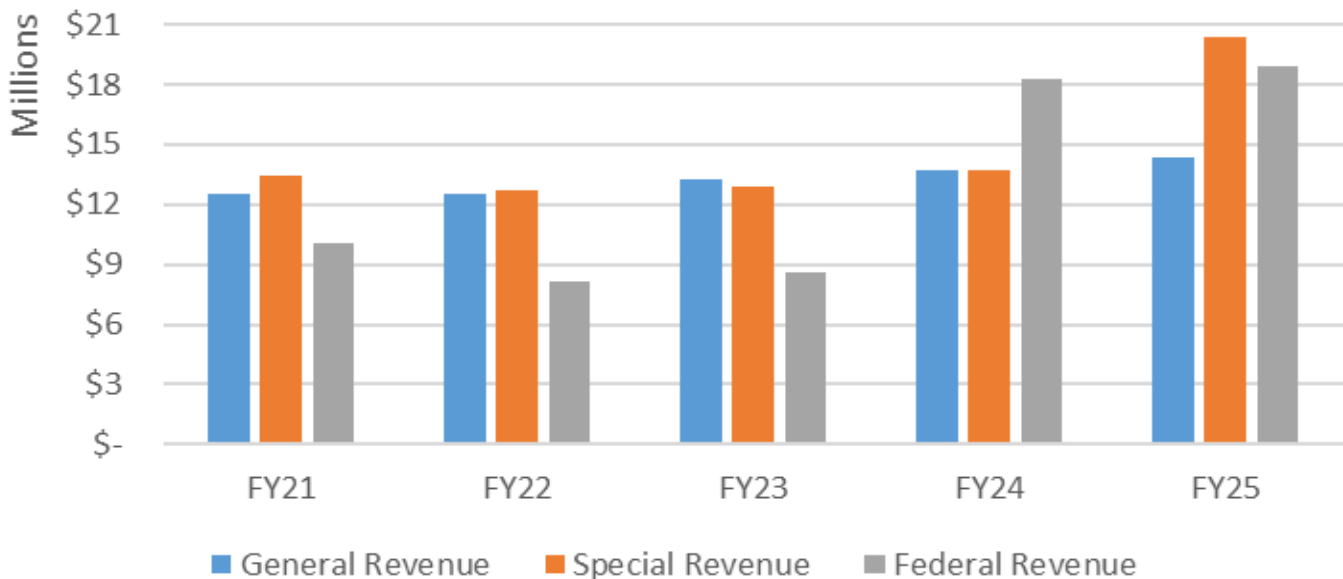
Federal Revenue

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 graph included, WVDA federal revenue continues to increase, attributable primarily 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.

Agency Revenue Sources
5-Year Summary





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 just over \$3.6 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. One loan was paid off during SFY25, and four loans were approved, totaling a \$1,761,025 investment in WV agriculture. During the year, the promotional rate approved by the Committee in FY24 to offer an interest rate of the current Wall Street Journal Prime Rate, less one percent, on loans secured by real estate continued to be in effect.





AGRICULTURAL **SERVICES**

THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)

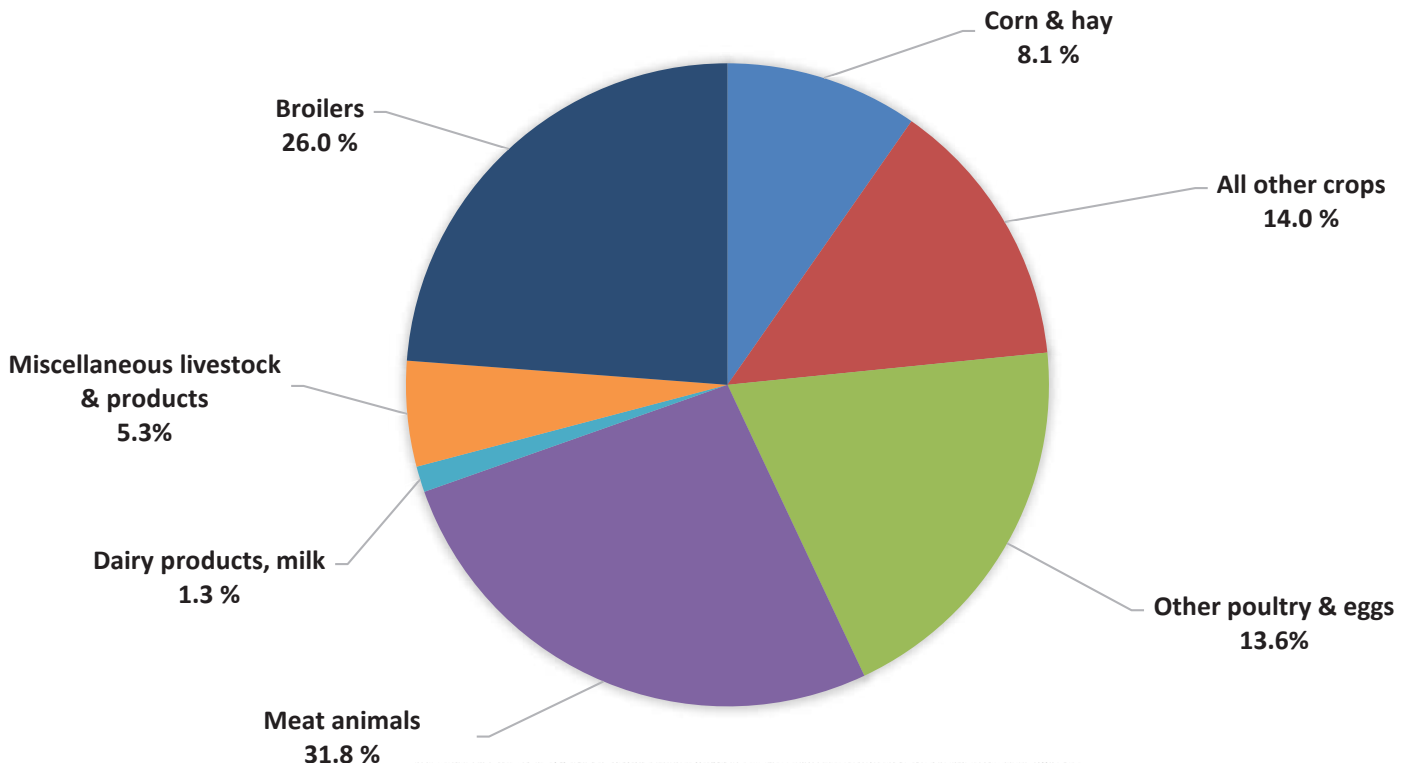
The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is one of 29 agencies under the umbrella of the United States Department of Agriculture. NASS is responsible for making the official, unbiased estimates of agriculture in a timely, accurate, and useful manner. We have 850 employees nationwide who are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

The West Virginia field office is considered a division within the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (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 the WVDA, land grant universities, bards 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 2024 cash receipts from farm marketings for all agricultural commodities in West Virginia totaled \$978,739,000, an increase of \$6 million from 2023. Receipts from livestock and livestock products accounted for 77.9% of the State total. Cash receipts from crops accounted for 22.1% of the 2024 total.

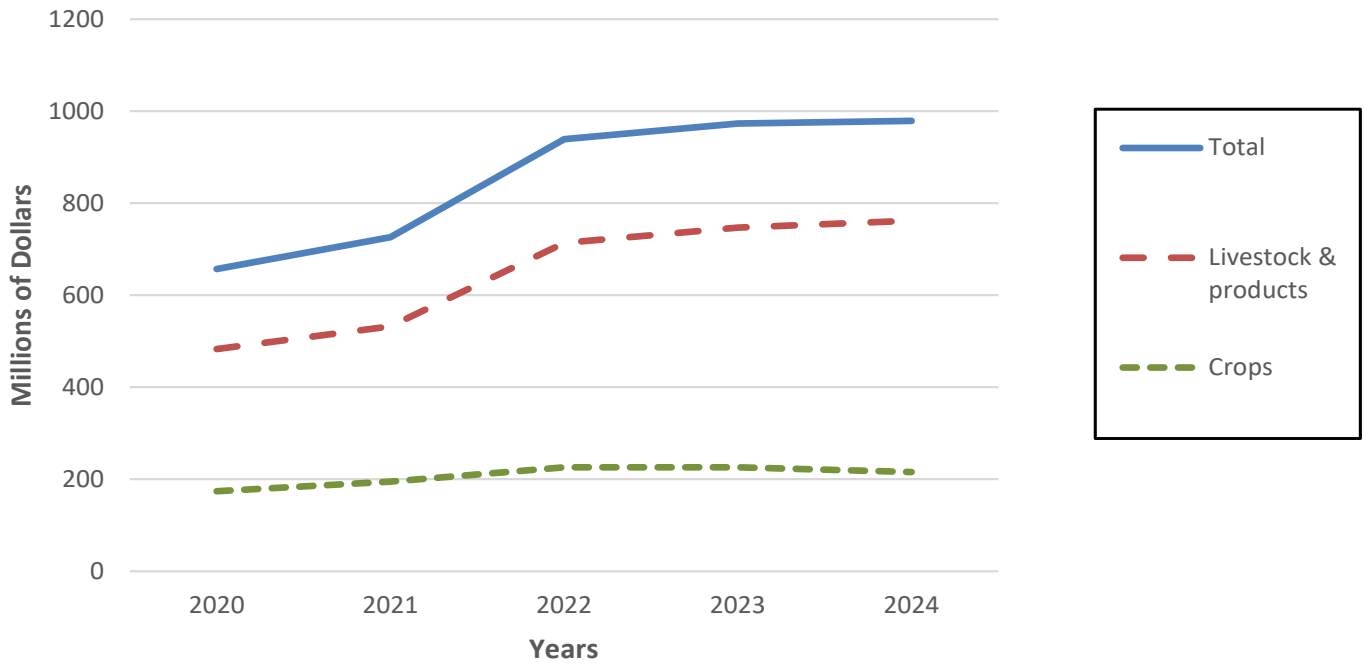
The largest contributor to the agricultural marketings in the State continues to be poultry and eggs. Cash receipts from the poultry industry, which includes broilers, eggs, turkeys, and farm chickens, accounted for 39.6% of the State total. The second leading contributor was cattle and calves, which accounted for 31% of the total in 2024.

Cash Receipts: Selected Commodities, West Virginia, 2024



* Cash receipts reflect sales of commodities from farms where produced within a calendar year irrespective of the year of production. Data as of September 3, 2025. Values are rounded to the nearest thousand. Totals may not add due to rounding. † 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 ‡ 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. § includes equine, sheep, and all other livestock. ¶ includes miscellaneous fruits and berries. ** includes greenhouse/nursery, Christmas trees, cats, vegetables, tobacco, and other crops. Source: USDA, Economic Research Service <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/farm-income-and-wealth-statistics.aspx>

Cash Receipts: Major Commodities, West Virginia, 2020 - 2024



NOTES



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER, KENT A. LEONHARDT