

The Market Bulletin

www.wvagriculture.org



Walt Helmick, Commissioner

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April 2014



Walt's View

Spring is officially here, although the recent snow might lead you to believe otherwise. Regardless, it will warm up sometime and another growing season will begin. Wild seeds that have lain dormant over the winter will soon be springing to life, and many of you will begin putting out seeds for your own home gardens.

We're planting seeds here at the West Virginia Department of Agriculture too. Not so much in a literal sense, but in a very real way all the same.

The seeds we're planting are those that will return local agriculture to being a fundamental component of our state's culture and economy. We've seen our state's extractive industries rise and fall. We've seen our heavy industries outsourced. But every year, we consume over \$7 billion in food, and yet we only produce about \$800 million worth here in West Virginia, according to the most recent estimates by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA-NASS). And half of that total is our commercial poultry industry, most of which is not consumed here. And another large portion of that total is the value of the hay we grow to feed the cattle that we ship out of state.

When it comes to fresh fruits,

We must become "agripreneurs"

vegetables and direct marketed meats, we only consume a fraction of our state's agricultural "production" - and our value of production is only a fraction of what we consume overall.

To say it simply, agriculture is the single greatest untapped economic development opportunity that currently exists in our state. It's an industry that can be conceived, operated, marketed and consumed completely within our borders.

But it will take a change in our collective mindset. We must get past the "company mentality" that has turned us into initiative-averse wage-takers. We must become "agripreneurs."

I've written in the past about initiatives the WVDA is pursuing to greatly increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables we produce: using reclaimed mine lands for apiaries and industrial agriculture sites, opening state-owned farmlands to military veterans and other private farmers, reaching out to engage young farmers.

But I'd like to focus on some of those young people who see the business potential of agriculture and are approaching it from a professional business perspective.

Sierra Cook of Glen Dale, a senior at John Marshall High School, won a \$10,000 college scholarship after her entry was chosen as the winner of West Virginia's inaugural high school business plan competition.

Her prize-winning concept? Production of maitake and shiitake mushrooms for restaurants, grocery stores and health food stores in the Ohio Valley.

And I think it's important to note, this is not an ag-specific contest. This contest is open to high school seniors throughout the state on any business topic. It's sponsored by the West Virginia Department of Education, the WVU College of Business and Economics, the Brickstreet Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and is funded by a \$3 million grant from the Brickstreet Foundation.

I hope the judges for this contest remain open to agriculture-based proposals because West Virginia FFA recently wrapped up its second annual business plan competition during the Small Farm Conference in Morgantown.

Second Annual WV Small Farm Center WV FFA Business Plan Competition



Left-right: Third Place (\$1,000): Andrew Houser, Creekside Corn Maze, Tucker County FFA; First Place (\$2,500): Maggie Parsons, Show U, Buffalo FFA; Second Place (\$1,500): Mikinna Poling, Bug Works, Buckhannon-Upshur FFA.

FFA has always been well-regarded for teaching not just agriculture, but also conservation, leadership, public speaking and, yes, business planning. Consequently, I think many of our agriculture education students will have a head start on their peers.

Taking the \$2,500 first-place prize in the FFA business plan competition was Maggie Parsons of Buffalo FFA and her Show U proposal. Second place was Mikinna Poling of Buckhannon-Upshur who took home \$1,500 for her Bug Works proposal. Third place was Andrew Houser of Tucker County who was awarded \$1,000 for his plan for Creekside Corn Maze.

Congratulations to all these outstanding students.

As always, if you have any questions, concerns or comments about agriculture in West Virginia, contact my office at 304-558-3550 or whelmick@wvda.us.

ATTENTION PRODUCERS!

Producers with premise ID numbers need to update their change of address, especially the new 911 addresses by contacting Shelly Lantz at the WVDA Animal Health Division at 304-558-2214.

How sweet it is ...at Cedar Run Farm

Debra Gard, Marketing Specialist-Promotions, Marketing & Development Division

Maple syrup season is quick and busy, but luckily we can enjoy the fruits of the labor all year long. In Pleasants County, sap has been running freely to the Sugar Shack at Cedar Run Farm. The Metz family hosted an open house in early March to share their production operation and give us a look at this tradition.



Bill Metz and family own and operate Cedar Run Farm in Friendly, WV, where they produce maple syrup, sell Christmas trees and host family activities throughout the year.

The family farm is set on a beautiful mountain top off Point Lookout Road near Friendly where Debbie and Bill Metz, their son, Chris, his wife Betsy, daughter, Angie and her husband Billy along with their grandchildren Kyle, Tucker, Abby and Ian, all work together as a family to harvest the sap and make delicious, pure and all natural maple syrup.

Bill was preparing to retire and trying to decide what he could do to keep busy. His son Chris suggested maple syrup since they had so many sugar maple trees on the farm, and so it all began five years ago and has grown into a wonderful family business that keeps everyone hopping.

Cedar Run Farm has 625 sugar maple trees tapped with small, clear blue tubes running from tree to tree as the sap moves quickly to a holding tank nestled in a valley at the bottom of the mountain. The sap is then pumped up the mountain, with a vacuum system, to another holding tank near the Sugar Shack where they run the sap through an evaporator to steam the water off creating pure maple syrup. From there it is moved to their commercial kitchen, reheated and passed through a filtration unit to remove the sugar sand.

The sap resembles water with a

mild sweet taste to it. Once the water is removed and it is cooked down, the syrup has a thicker consistency and is sweet and ready for that stack of hotcakes or waffles. It takes about 2,000 pounds of sap to yield approximately 35 gallons of pure maple syrup. Each tap yields approximately one quart of syrup per season. The family plans to expand to 1,800 taps by 2015 on their 160-acre farm.

The wind is a factor in sap flow and it can slow down the process. Squirrels like to chew through the tubes and it is necessary to walk the lines continually during harvest to keep the sap flowing and make any needed repairs. The ground temperature also plays an important part in the process because if it is too cold the sap slows down or stops.

The sap lines are good for about 10 to 12 years but the taps are replaced each year and the drops from the taps are replaced every 3 to 4 years. Continuous maintenance is important to keep things running smoothly.

The good sap will flow for about 4 to 6 weeks beginning in early/mid February through early/mid March depending on weather conditions. Once the trees begin to bud it signals the end of the season because the sap develops a "buddy" taste, resulting in a less than desirable product.

The Metz family uses taps containing check valves to maximize sap yields per tap. Once the season is over, the taps are pulled and the lines are flushed with a sanitizing solution. The maple trees naturally heal and are tapped for generations without harm to the tree.

Down on the Farm in December you can choose your own Christmas tree and create holiday memories with your friends and family. The farm offers a selection of Norway Spruce, Scotch Pine, Canaan Fir and Douglas Fir with more varieties available in the future.

Summertime activities on the farm include garden vegetables, orchards, chickens, blueberries and strawberries. Debbie plants her own starts for the garden and gets everyone involved to plant, prune, pick, preserve, sell and enjoy.

Never idle in her spare time, Debbie also spends hours creating beautiful art pieces using old, unique treasures to make Christmas ornaments, pillows, trees, angels, painted gourds and more. You can find her hand-crafted one-of-a-kind creations at Tamarack and other gift shops around the area.

To get a list of gift shops selling their syrup or Debbie's creations, visit their website at www.cedarrunfarm.com phone 304-684-7936 or "like" them on Facebook.



Chris Metz explains the process of collecting sap through the web of tubing running from tree to tree. The Farm currently taps 625 trees and hopes to expand to 1,800 taps by 2015.



SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

Jean Smith, Director, WVDA Marketing & Development Division

The weather will hopefully soon be sunny and bright! Our recipes for this month feature spring meats and vegetables which may be sourced locally. I hope that you are able to purchase locally grown products and support our state's economy. – *Happy Cooking!*

GRILLED LAMB LOIN CHOPS

Recipe Courtesy: American Lamb Board

Marinating these chops overnight with yogurt and citrus tenderizes the meat and adds bright flavor that complements the smoky char from the grill.

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| 1½ pounds lamb loin chops, 1 to 1½ inches thick | 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped and divided |
| Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper | 1 small red onion, finely chopped |
| 3 tablespoons plain yogurt, low fat or whole milk | ¾ cup finely chopped green olives |
| Juice and zest of one orange, divided | ¼ cup coarsely chopped flat leaf parsley |
| | ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil, plus more for the grill |

The day before serving, pat the chops dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Lay the chops in a shallow non-reactive pan such as an 8-inch square baking dish.

Combine the yogurt, half of the orange juice and zest, and half of the garlic in a small bowl. Whisk the ingredients together and pour over the chops, turning them once to coat both sides with the marinade. Cover the pan with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

Remove the chops from the refrigerator 30-45 minutes prior to grilling to allow meat to come to room temperature. Heat a gas or charcoal grill to medium-high, or preheat a grill pan over medium-high heat. Remove the chops from the marinade and allow most of it to drip off. Lightly oil the grill or grill pan, and arrange the chops over the heat. Grill 3 minutes, turn each chop 90 degrees, and cook for another 3 minutes or until the chops are nicely charred. Flip the chops and cook on the other side for about 6 more minutes, turning halfway through. They should still be pink inside. Remove the chops from the grill and place on a warm plate to rest while you make the sauce.

Sauce: Combine remaining orange juice and zest, and chopped garlic with the onion, olives, parsley and olive oil in small bowl. Stir well to combine, spoon over chops.

RAMP POTATOES

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| 5 large potatoes, peeled and sliced | 5 slices cooked bacon, chopped |
| 2 tablespoons bacon drippings | Salt and ground black pepper to taste |
| 6 ramps, thinly sliced | |

Place potatoes into large pot of salted water; cover and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until just beginning to soften, about 10 minutes; drain.

Heat bacon drippings in large skillet over medium-high heat; cook and stir potatoes in the hot drippings until golden brown, about 15 minutes. Add ramps and bacon to the potatoes; season with salt and black pepper. Continue cooking until the ramps are soft, about 5 minutes.

GYRO ROLL UPS

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| 1 tablespoon olive oil | 2 teaspoons salt | ⅔ cup chopped fresh parsley |
| 1 pound ground lamb | 2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper | 1 pound pizza crust dough |
| 6 cloves garlic, crushed | 1 dash hot pepper sauce | 6 ounces feta cheese |
| 1 large onion, sliced | | ½ zucchini, diced |
| 1 tablespoon dried oregano | | 8 ounces chopped black olives |
| ⅔ teaspoon ground cumin | | ½ teaspoon garlic powder |

Preheat oven to 450°F. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Brown meat with garlic, onion, oregano, cumin, salt, pepper and hot sauce. When meat is almost done, add parsley and cook until the parsley wilts. Remove mixture from heat and allow to cool.

Roll pizza dough out into a rectangle (about 18"x12"), with the long side laid out left-to-right in front of you. Spread out feta cheese, zucchini and black olives evenly over the dough, leaving 3 inches from the edges of the crust uncovered. Spread the cooled meat mixture over the top, still leaving edges of dough uncovered.

Starting with the edge closest to you, roll up the whole thing until it is all rolled up. You can do this by using the uncovered edge of dough at the end as a 'strip' to stick to the roll and seal it, making sure both ends are pressed down and sealed. Sprinkle with garlic powder and bake in the preheated oven for 5 minutes. Then, reduce heat to 350°F and bake for about 30 minutes, or until golden brown.

WHAT'S COOKIN'

April 2014

TANGY SPRING SALAD

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| 1 bunch (about 1 pound) asparagus |
| 1 handful (about ⅓ pound) ramps |
| 1 tablespoon vegetable oil |
| ½ teaspoon sea salt plus more to taste |
| 10-12 fresh mint leaves |
| 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil |
| Half a lemon |
| ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese, chèvre, or other crumbly mild-yet-salty white cheese |

Trim or snap off the tough ends of asparagus. Cut trimmed asparagus into 1"- to 2" lengths. Clean ramps, removing any loose layers, rinsing off any dirt or grit, and patting them dry. Trim off the root ends and roughly chop.

Heat large frying pan over high heat. Once hot, add the vegetable oil, swirl to cover pan, and add asparagus and ramps. Cook until the asparagus and ramps touching the pan start to brown slightly – about 3 minutes. Stir, scraping up the vegetables and turning them well, sprinkle with salt, and cook until this new layer touching the pan starts to brown, another 2 minutes or so. Stir and scrape and let the vegetables sit and cook a third and final time.

While the vegetables are cooking, finely chop the mint or cut it into thin chiffonade ribbons.

Transfer vegetables to serving platter. Drizzle with olive oil and spritz with lemon juice, sprinkle with extra salt (if you like), and top with a scattering of the mint and crumbled feta. Serve warm or at room temperature.

GYPSY MOTH TREATMENTS PROPOSED FOR SPRING

Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick has announced that the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is proposing aerial treatment of approximately 974 acres in Hardy County to reduce significant impacts to forests by the gypsy moth. These acres will be treated under the WVDA Cooperative State-County-Landowner (CSCL) Suppression Program.

The gypsy moth is the most serious forest pest in West Virginia. It is a non-native, invasive insect that feeds on over 500 species of trees and shrubs, including West Virginia hardwoods, according to Quentin "Butch" Sayers, Assistant Director of WVDA's Plant Industries Division.

"Defoliation by gypsy moth caterpillars can kill trees, or weaken them substantially, making them more susceptible to other pests and diseases. This treatment program helps to safeguard our forest resources including homeowner's trees and our timber and tourism industries, which are vital components of our state's economy," said Sayers. "Without control measures, our water quality, recreation experiences, wildlife habitat, and timber production could all be negatively affected."

The WVDA consulted with the WV Division of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Biologist and the United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Services concerning the presence of rare, threatened or endangered species issues in the proposed treatment areas. Both agencies concurred that no impacts to any rare, threatened or endangered species are anticipated.

The young gypsy moth caterpillars are spread by wind, which blows the silken threads they exude, creating a parachute effect. Movement by this mechanism tends to be slow. Man however, has sped the process up considerably, by unwittingly transporting gypsy moth egg masses or caterpillars in loads of firewood, on RVs, campers and other vehicles.

WVDA officials caution against the transport of firewood into or out of the state because pests such as the gypsy moth, hemlock woolly adelgid, emerald ash borer, and other non-native invasive

insects may be in or on the wood. Non-native pests such as these have potentially devastating economic effects. Owners of RVs and campers are asked to thoroughly inspect and wash their equipment before moving it. Even with all of these precautions, the gypsy moth has, and will continue to spread, leaving site specific treatments as the only way to keep it from population explosions and resulting tree mortality.

Landowners within the CSCL Program area of West Virginia contacted the WVDA to have their properties surveyed to determine if they contained gypsy moth population densities high enough to produce possible tree mortality, defoliation, or a significant nuisance factor in the spring of 2014. Areas with 250 egg masses per acre or higher were designated for possible treatment on properties considered wooded residential or wooded recreational.

Egg mass densities on non-residential forested lands must contain 500 egg masses per acre or higher in order to qualify for treatment. The areas proposed for treatment were

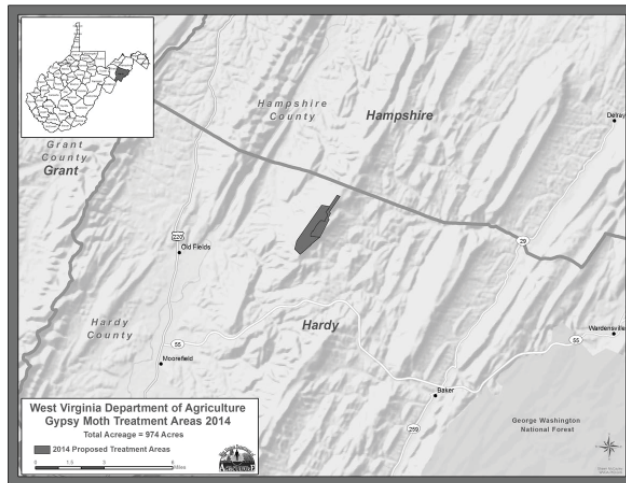
delineated on topographic maps and a contract, deposit invoice, and signature map of the proposed spray block boundaries were sent to the landowner.

The landowners in the CSCL Program sign a contract with the WVDA and pay a deposit confirming that they are requesting treatment for their gypsy moth problem. The landowners select the spray material to be used on their property and verify the property boundaries of the area they requested for treatment. The spray materials offered for 2014 were Btk or Mimic. These materials are all labeled by the EPA for the treatment of gypsy moths and safe for use over residential areas.

More detailed maps with specific locations of the proposed treatment areas are available from the WVDA Plant Industries Division offices. These areas would be treated during early to mid-May 2014 depending on weather conditions and the stage of development of the gypsy moth.

The WVDA will immediately begin solicitation of public comment on the areas proposed for treatment to reduce the devastating effect on West Virginia's forest by the gypsy moth. The WVDA will use this input to identify any significant issues related to the proposed project and to develop a range of alternatives.

Any comments or interest in this proposed project should be submitted in writing to Quentin "Butch" Sayers, Assistant Director, PO Box 9, New Creek, WV 26743 or via e-mail to qsayers@wvda.us no later than April 15, 2014.



Corn Growers Needed for Exotic Pest Survey

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Charleston, WV is looking for corn growers to cooperate in a survey for exotic insects that attack corn. The corn can be either field corn or sweet corn and grown in at least a two-acre block. Pheromone traps for seven different moth pests will be set at each location. USDA staff will check the traps approximately every two weeks from late May until October. If you are interested in participating in this important survey please contact Rachel Braud at (304) 343-8585 or e-mail: Rachel.A.Braud@usda.aphis.gov.

WV Cattle Women invited to attend Region 1 American National Cattle Women Meeting

The Region 1 meeting of the American National Cattle Women (ANCW) will be held May 9-10, at the Bob Evans Farm in Rio Grande, Ohio.

Activities will begin on Friday, May 9. Depending on arrival time, there will be many options at the farm for unplanned tours and sight-seeing. Dinner will be at 7 p.m. at the Wild Horse Cafe in Pomeroy Ohio (RSVP for dinner by May 7, to Tracy Fitzsimmons at 304-558-2210 or tfitzsimmons@wvda.us). Saturday morning meetings will kick off at the Farm at 8 a.m. with a variety of speakers and discussions. You do not have to be a member of your state's CattleWomen's Association or the ANCW to attend. Meeting will commence around 3:30 p.m.

Register by April 25 for \$60; late registration cost will be \$85.

For more information, an agenda and hotel information contact Region I Director, Kayla Alexander at (937) 302-0073 or kalivestockservice@gmail.com.

PRELIMINARY 2012 CENSUS RESULTS PROVIDE A SNAPSHOT OF WEST VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE

The value of West Virginia's agricultural products increased 37 percent over the past five years to a total of \$809 million, according to preliminary results from the Census of Agriculture, produced every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA-NASS).

West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick met with USDA-NASS Regional Director David Knopf to go over some of the first findings to come out of the Census data that was gathered in 2012 and analyzed during 2013.

"I'm very pleased to see West Virginia's total agricultural value going up, but I caution that it's not necessarily representative of greater production or even a greater profit margin for our farmers," said Commissioner Helmick. "That figure by itself doesn't factor in the rising costs of feed, fuel and other inputs, nor does it account for the fact that we've actually lost two percent of our farmland since the last Census.

Commissioner Helmick noted that West Virginians are consuming over seven times more food than the \$800 million currently being produced in the state.

"There is an enormous opportunity for existing and prospective professional farmers to get in on the ground floor of the

local food movement in West Virginia," said Commissioner Helmick. "There are literally billions of dollars that are leaving our state each year to buy food that we could be producing right here."

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years – the last one in 2007. First published in 1840, the Census of Agriculture accounts for all U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. When available in May, the final report will provide even more detailed information for West Virginia providing data on all farm operators and data down to the county level.

"One of the most important takeaways to remember about the Census of Agriculture is that the information is used for decision-making by producers as well as all those who serve farmers, ranchers and rural communities – federal, state and local governments, agribusinesses, trade associations and many others," said Knopf. "When we look at the data for our state, we

Value of Sales, Selected States

State	2012	2007	% Change
West Virginia	809,175,000	591,665,000	+37
Kentucky	5,067,334,000	4,824,561,000	+5
Maryland	2,271,397,000	1,835,090,000	+24
Ohio	10,059,088,000	7,070,212,000	+42
Pennsylvania	7,370,153,000	5,808,803,000	+27
Virginia	3,753,791,000	2,906,188,000	+29
United States	394,646,980,000	297,220,491,000	+33

can all use it as a snapshot in time to see how West Virginia agriculture is changing over time and how it compared to the rest of the country."

Among the other preliminary findings:

- West Virginia had 21,489 farms, down nine percent from 2007.
- Land in farms decreased by only two percent to 3.6 million acres.
- The average age of a principal farm operator in West Virginia was 59.7 years, up 1.6 years since 2007, and continuing a trend of steady increase.

For more information, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov.

WV Woodland Owners Association 2014 Educational Tours

Do you own a woodland property and wonder about projects you might do to make it more productive? Or do you just like hearing about what woodland owners do to improve the woods they love so much?

Then plan to attend any of five forestry and wildlife management educational tours on woodland properties across West Virginia that will highlight the management practices conducted by the five host landowners. All tours are free, including lunch. These walking tours will cover generally flat ground with a few relatively steep sections, so it is recommended to wear sturdy walking shoes. Following the walking tour, a free lunch will be provided. These events are sponsored by the West Virginia Woodland Owners Association, and the WVU Appalachian Hardwood Center/ Extension Service.

Harrison County: Sat., May 10, 2014 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Host landowner, Roger Phillips will lead the tour and tell the group about some key strategies in maintaining access roads, controlling invasive plants, harvesting timber, tree thinnings including crop tree release and wild grapevine control, and planting oak and other tree species. We will also visit wildlife food plots and habitat areas on the property.

Randolph County (pending): Saturday, May 24, 2014 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. More information coming soon.

Hardy County: Saturday, June 14, 2014 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Host landowner, Andy Leginzie, will lead the tour and explain to the group some key strategies in maintaining access roads, controlling invasive plants, harvesting timber, and planting oak and other tree species, as

well as visiting wildlife food plots, field and habitat areas as well as a fruit tree orchard and wildlife water-holes and a spring-fed pond on the property.

Tucker-Randolph County: Saturday, July 19, 2014 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Host landowners, Jim and Jeff Kochenderfer, will highlight and demonstrate some of the various techniques used to improve, increase, and maintain the amount of desirable tree species in your woodlands including the use of herbicide and cutting to reduce and control both native tree (American beech for example) and other plant

species that directly compete with the more desirable trees such as oak, yellow poplar, black cherry, hickory, etc.

Nicholas County: Saturday, September 21, 2014 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Host landowner, Chuck Brammer will tell the group about some key strategies in maintaining access roads, timber harvesting, tree thinnings including crop tree release, wild grapevine control, planting apple, Norway spruce, basswood, and other tree species, planting various berry species, and attracting pollinators including a beekeeping operation.

Watch for more information at www.woaofwv.org or contact Dan Magill at 304-293-9419 or dmagill@wvu.edu RSVP to Magill by phone or email if you are attending.

Charles Town Middle FFA donates to Fair

The Charles Town Middle FFA concluded their National FFA Week events on Feb. 22, with an FFA Work Day. Nine FFA members, 11 parents and community volunteers, and their advisor, Kristin Friend, spent the day constructing six-foot wooden benches to be donated to the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. The idea for the project had been in the works since August when the chapter received a donation of \$2,150 from Eddie and Todd Hough, owners of



Charles Town Middle FFA celebrated National FFA Week by constructing 33 wooden benches to be donated to the Jefferson County Fairgrounds.



Shane Titus (left), CTMS FFA member helps Kyle Friend with the router.

Oakwood Farms. The Hough brothers were the winning bidder of the chapter's cornflake cookies at the Jefferson County Fair Bake Auction.

Friend said that the chapter has been extremely blessed in recent years to receive so much support from the community that they wanted to give back. During the week of the Fair, Bob Gruber, Fair President, met with Friend and discussed potential projects the chapter could do at the fairgrounds.

The chapter spent half of the donation this year on chapter activities like attending the National FFA Convention, FFA competitions, and field trips. The other half was spent on buying material for the benches.

"It is important that students know how to give back to the community and participate in service activities like these," said Friend.

The assembly line was so productive that by the end of the day the chapter had exceeded their goal of building 30 benches and had made 33. The benches were delivered to the fairgrounds and will be used at next year's Fair. This is the second year the chapter has been able to complete a project for the fairgrounds and they hope to make this an annual event. The chapter has truly lived up to the FFA motto which is, Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve.

WVDA 'WOMEN IN AG' NOMINATIONS DUE JUNE 1

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is seeking nominations for the 2014 "West Virginia Women in Agriculture" program. Nominations are due by June 1, and those making the nominations are asked to provide as much detail about the nominee's agricultural career as possible.

Induction is granted to those women who have made significant contributions to the establishment, development, advancement or improvement of West Virginia agriculture, forestry or specialty crops in the Mountain State. Biographies of the selected women will be featured during the 2014 State Fair of West Virginia.

Nomination forms can be obtained by contacting the WVDA Marketing and Development Division at 304-558-2210, via e-mail to tfitzsimmons@wvda.us or on the WVDA website at www.wvagriculture.org. Completed nomination forms must be returned to: Tracy Fitzsimmons, West Virginia Department of Agriculture, 1900 Kanawha Blvd., E, Charleston, WV 25305, or emailed to tfitzsimmons@wvda.us.

"Discover Nature" Event to Offer Educational Outdoor Family Fun

The Monongahela National Forest along with several partners would like to invite you to Seneca Rocks Discovery Center on May 3, 2014 to enjoy a fun-filled day of activities called "Discover Nature."

The day will begin at 10 a.m. with a garlic mustard pull, where families will help to remove one of the most invasive plants found in West Virginia. Individuals and teams will have the chance to compete for \$300 in cash prizes. Lunch will be provided for those who volunteer and will feature a few dishes prepared with the tasty, but troublesome plant.

The afternoon will focus on a series of hands-on activities and games aimed at increasing awareness of healthy forests and watersheds and providing a chance to get outside to enjoy our wild and wonderful state. People of all ages will have the chance to learn about bats and take a trip into an inflatable cave, join a bug hunt to learn more about insects, celebrate Smokey Bear's 70th birthday, learn about endangered species, and much more! This interactive session will be open from 1-4 p.m.

For more information about Discover Nature, contact Cynthia Sandeno at 304-636-1800.

USDA requires that cattle be officially identified before crossing state lines

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) rule states that effective March 11, cattle moved across state lines are required to be officially identified and accompanied by an interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI). Cattle affected by this rule include: sexually-intact beef cattle over 18 months of age, all dairy cattle, and all cattle being moved for shows, rodeos or other exhibitions.

Current exemptions to the rule include beef cattle under 18 months of age and cattle moving directly to a recognized slaughter establishment.

Official identification is an official ear tag. This can be either a metal NUES "brite" tag or a tag that bears a 15 digit identification number beginning with 840. The ear tag must also have the official ear tag shield imprinted on it. In order to purchase official ID tags, cattle owners must have a premise identification number.

For more information, contact Burke Holvey at 304-269-0598. For information on a Premise ID Number (PIN) contact Shelly Lantz at 304-558-2214.

WVU Extension GARDEN CALENDAR

April 2014

- April 8 Plant blackberries. Seed parsnips (outdoors).
- April 9 Plant or seed Swiss chard. Plant fruit trees.
- April 10 Plant peas and seed radishes (outdoors)
- April 11 Plant collards.
- April 12 Apply crabgrass control.
- April 13 Seed leaf lettuce (outdoors).
- April 14 Bed sweet potatoes for transplanting.
- April 15 Seed or plant collards. Seed late tomatoes (indoors).
- April 16 Fertilize lawn.
- April 17 Start compost pile. Plant perennials.
- April 18 Loosen mulch on strawberries.
- April 19 Remove row cover from strawberries. Refresh mulch in landscape beds.
- April 20 Plant peas (outdoors). Transplant leeks.
- April 21 Seed new lawn.
- April 23 Seed carrots. Seed Swiss chard.
- April 24 Seed Asian greens. Plant (transplant) or seed corn.
- April 25 Plant summer-flowering bulbs.
- April 26 Apply pre-emergent landscape weed control.
- April 27 Begin spraying trees after petals fall.