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Around the Dome — Dwayne O’Dell
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Growing a State and A Nation
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We, as a country, are experiencing what happens when there is a lack of proper leadership from the President of the United States. Our country must have leaders who have a moral compass that guides them. Since the founding of our nation, this has set us apart as an exceptional, moral, and freedom-loving nation. Biden fails on all these counts, and I believe that history will judge him as the most evil and corrupt President in our country’s history. President Biden’s administration is systematically engaged in the complete destruction of those values that our country is founded upon.

I truly believe that Biden’s lack of leadership has led to rampant instability around the globe. Nations worldwide have depended upon American leadership to provide a “peace through strength” framework. The Biden administration had endangered that framework and is more concerned with extremist climate change restrictions and their DEI (Diversity, Equity, Exclusion) goals than they are about the very real threats to our country.

Many people claim that Biden’s policies have put us closer to WWII than we have ever been. It is crazy that money from the US to Iran likely paid for many of the bombs and missiles used against Israel by Iranian-supported terrorists. After the barbaric attack on their nation on October 7, our support for Israel must never be in doubt.

It is hard to believe the number of demonstrations around the world in support of the Hamas terrorists who attacked Israel. It is even harder to believe the number of demonstrations on our college campuses and elsewhere in our country in support of these terrorists, many of which are happening in the most elite colleges and universities in the country. It appears that decades of ultra-liberal indoctrination at these institutions are coming home to roost. It may be appropriate that the students involved in these demonstrations are exposed and required to spend a semester in one of these terrorist countries to complete their education. In addition, they should be required to spend part of their summers mowing grass and caretaking at Arlington National Cemetery. Perhaps they might then fully understand the ultimate sacrifice made by so many for the freedoms they now enjoy.

I am concerned that it is just a matter of time before we have more terrorist attacks in this country. No one knows for sure how many terrorists have already been allowed to walk into our country across wide-open borders. Since this administration took over, the total number of so-called “known gotaways” that have entered our country totals about 1.6 million. That is about the same population as West Virginia! These illegals were not processed at all, and we know nothing about them. Evidently, the Biden administration does not care about the threat that these illegals pose to all of us. It seems that minting new Biden voters is all that matters.

To coin a phrase, “elections have consequences.” That rings especially true with the last presidential election. I am a firm believer that elections should be a one-day event unless there is a good reason to request an absentee ballot — and I mean a one-day event with PROPER ballots. Many are already trying to find a way to justify the mail-out ballots in the next election. Mail-out ballots make an easy path for election manipulation. I believe that election will be in question wherever mail-out ballots are used.

Speaking of elections, now is the right time to think about the people who represent us at all levels. Local, state, and national elections are all important. If we have people representing us who do not share our philosophy and beliefs, we need to recruit new people to run for office. With the filing period for public office being in January, now is the time to make those evaluations and have time to recruit new candidates if necessary.
I hope each of you are enjoying the crisp fall weather. It’s a beautiful time of year as we approach the Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations. Certainly, we have much to be thankful for, including the ongoing freedoms we enjoy in America. Much credit must be given to our forefathers and those who have served in the military to maintain those freedoms. Please consider the following agricultural topics.

USDA has awarded $5.5 million to an Indiana company to purchase equipment “to process chicken manure and other waste from egg production facilities into fertilizer”. USDA has announced 33 projects under the Fertilizer Production Expansion Program.

The United States Supreme Court has decided to not take up a North Carolina “ag gag” law for review. North Carolina had passed a law that penalizes “unauthorized video recording on nonpublic property”. This law was appealed by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) to the Fourth Circuit Court, which ruled parts of the law unconstitutional by a 2-1 decision. The law was intended to address some individuals who obtain jobs in poultry processing facilities, dairy farms, and other agricultural operations, then take unauthorized video surveillance of the operations. Often, such videos were taken out of context and used to try to influence additional over-regulation of agricultural operations. The Fourth Circuit Court’s decision upheld that undercover investigative work is protected by the First Amendment. The court said this undercover type work supports much-needed accountability across the agriculture industry in North Carolina.

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The North Carolina Farm Bureau and the state’s Attorney General argued that the high court should take up the case because it presents conflict with other federal court rulings. The Fourth Circuit Court’s jurisdiction also includes South Carolina, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.

USDA has lowered the 2023 forecast for red meat and poultry production to 1.07 billion pounds. It also raised beef product numbers to 26.98 million pounds and lowered broiler numbers to 46.49 million pounds. Egg production was forecast at 9.18 million dozen eggs, and pork products at 27.29 million pounds. The 2024 forecast was increased to a total of 106.66 billion pounds.

Two new proposals have surfaced in the United States Congress. The Continuous Improvement and Accountability in Organic Standards Act would require that USDA request public input on organic standards every five years. Also, the Supporting Urban and Innovative Farming Act would expand USDA services for urban producers and collect more agricultural data.

In state news, Delegate Riley Keaton has resigned his seat to pursue other opportunities. Legislators had interim meetings in mid-October to receive information on various topics. The Forest Management Review Committee received information on property that was encumbered by a deed of trust, then the owner harvested the timber without notifying the banking institution that held the deed of trust.

Revenue Secretary Dave Hardy updated the legislature on West Virginia tax collections, which were up 5 percent overall for September. Consumer sales tax was up 9.6 percent and personal income tax was up 23 percent; however, severance tax revenue was down 68 percent. In the last session, the Legislature reduced the personal income tax rate by 21.25 percent. It is anticipated that this reduced rate will return approximately $740 million to West Virginia taxpayers.

Legislators were also updated on ongoing medical research and improved technology being used in human medicine. Health care affects the U.S. economy by 10 percent and is a major part of economic activity in West Virginia. Information was presented that focused on the medical community shifting from diagnosis/treatment to prevention, which provides huge cost savings.
Finally, as you gather with family during Thanksgiving, I encourage you to pause and review the great freedoms we have been granted in this country. President Abraham Lincoln’s Thanksgiving Proclamation noted how Almighty God had prolonged our national life another year. President Ronald Reagan said, “Americans have always understood that truly one must give in order to receive. Thanksgiving should be a day of giving as well as a day of thanks.”

Have a great day!
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Paying it Forward

At Farm Bureau, we believe that when we equip, empower and engage with the next generation, our organization and American agriculture become stronger. It’s about showing future farmers and ranchers, veterinarians and agriculture professionals, and researchers and innovators how Farm Bureau can help them on their journey.

I know firsthand the difference that programs like 4-H, and our own Young Farmers & Ranchers can make in a young person’s life. When this dairy farmer from Georgia went to his first county Farm Bureau meeting as a young farmer, I never would have dreamed of the opportunities that lay ahead, and I know I wouldn’t be here today without the training and opportunities I experienced through YF&R. I truly felt like an investment was made in me, and that only made me more eager to go beyond my fence rows and give back as a leader.

I am constantly amazed by the young leaders I get to meet around the country. From collegiate and YF&R programs to state and national competitions, we are constantly working to help grow and empower future leaders. One example of this is our Discussion Meet, a chance for these young members to show off their agriculture knowledge and fine-tune their public speaking skills. We also see them leading through service with programs such as Harvest for All, where in 2022 alone, YF&R members donated 25 million pounds of food and $1 million to local food banks.

On all levels, we work to support young farmers and ranchers through leadership development programs, competitions and service opportunities. And while there are far more examples of what young farmers and ranchers are up to across the country, it’s these focus areas that equip them to be our next leaders. We want them to be ready and eager to carry on our mission of providing a sustainable future of safe and abundant food, fiber and renewable fuel for our nation and the world.

Partnering with organizations aimed at the same goal of cultivating young ag leaders is an important priority and part of how we support youth. We regularly engage with the National 4-H Council, the National FFA Organization, the National Society for Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS) and Agriculture Future of America (AFA), to help ensure, together, a brighter future for American agriculture.

Many of our members got their start in these organizations, myself included, and it’s crucial to work together to engage the next generation and get them excited for the future of agriculture.

One fantastic example of this collaboration is our annual convention. Every year, we invite middle- and high-school members of 4-H, FFA and Jr. MANRRS to take part in our Youth Leadership Program. It’s a great opportunity—and completely free—for these students to connect with farmers and ranchers from across the United States, receive leadership training and learn about various parts of the agriculture industry. I hope you’ll help me spread the word to students and young leaders to reach out about having the registration fee waved to join us in Salt Lake City this January.

I will always be grateful for those who took the time to encourage and equip me along my journey. I have no doubt that’s how leaders across Farm Bureau feel. Former college football coach, Woody Hayes, once said, “You can never really pay it back, but you can always pay it forward.” That is what we are striving for with the next generation in Farm Bureau. We may never be able to pay back the folks who came alongside us and helped shape us into who we are today, but we can pay it forward for the next group of agricultural leaders.

Whitney Brown and Emily Bassett of Pine Grove, WV
Gilmer County

Farm to Table Dinner

Gilmer County Farm Bureau held its first Farm to Table dinner on September 24 at the Rt.18 Farm Market. The folks enjoyed a meal of roasted pulled pork, smoked ham, roasted pork loin, county corn, roasted potatoes, coleslaw, fresh vegetables, honey-glazed baked squash, walnut-apple squash casserole along with rolls, drinks, and an array of desserts. The 55 diners enjoyed a wonderful evening of food and fellowship.

Wetzel County

Autumnfest

Wetzel County Farm Bureau was set up at the Wetzel County Autumnfest in New Martinsville, WV for trick or treat night.

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West Virginia Farm Bureau has impacted my life by keeping me informed about all the new regulations impacting the farming communities and informing us when they are going to change. The bureau helps farmers throughout West Virginia with the food supply chain, the farmer’s markets, and the beef industry. Consumers benefit from the farmer’s markets supplying fresh produce from West Virginia farmers, beef cattle operations producing the very best beef possible, along with all other livestock production, WV tourism, support of all the FFA and 4-H programs in WV, young farmers and so much more.

My love for farming and livestock animals has led me on an educational path to pursue a degree in Animal and Nutritional Science with the hope of attending Veterinarian School. I plan to attend West Virginia University Parkersburg this fall for one year to get my basic classes. After that, I will transfer to West Virginia University to pursue a bachelor’s degree as a stepping stone to apply to Veterinary School. Because of my love for my community, after graduation, my dream is to return home to Jackson County to open my own Veterinarian Clinic with an emphasis on large animals. There is a great need in our county for this service.

I have been interested in farming and livestock since I was small when my grandpa gave me a registered Polled Hereford calf for my very own. Grandpa took me to the livestock sale
on Saturdays and we would always stay till the sale ended. I loved it. I have been in 4-H for nine years and FFA for six years, I have taken market hogs, replacement heifers, and steers to the Jackson County Jr Fair for nine years. I have been shadowing a Veterinary this year, going on farm calls with him, and also going into the clinic for the small animals. I participated in FFA competition for the past two years in Veterinary Science and finished eighth in the state this year. Our team finished third. My education plans will require at least eight or nine years of study and my determination will carry me through.

My dad and I have a cow-calf beef operation with Registered Black Angus and I also have a herd of Registered Polled Herefords. The beef, livestock, and agriculture industry as a whole is so very important to our country and I want to be/ stay a part of the industry. I will advocate for the advancement of agriculture, livestock marketing, and farming to let the consumers understand better how the livestock is raised, fed, handled, and most importantly, how the farmer cares for all their animals. Not only do we need to be supportive of our farmers across America but as farmers we have to be aware of our environment, health, and well-being of our communities and keep everything stable for the next generations of farmers to come because without farmers our country could not survive.

I believe in the farming community, and it will stay stable only if we as producers monitor the quality of meat and the products we produce and sell to the consumers. We need to keep the consumers informed of what we are doing and how we are doing it as an industry and show them their concerns are ours as well as theirs. Show the consumer how many hours are spent with our livestock keeping them healthy, fed with good nutrition, and how we take care of our livestock before going to market. We as producers need to always have the quality of products they expect from us, whether it be food or the other great products our state is known for. I believe FFA, 4-H, and my family all have helped mold me into the young man I am today, and the adult I hope to become. I am committed to maintaining a strong and positive leadership role in the advancement of farming, agriculture, and healthy livestock because farmers are what feed AMERICA.
Faithful in the Fields

by Cody Mitchell

God and Agriculture. You can’t have one without the other. It’s like a sheep and its shepherd, a tree and sunlight, and fruit and its vine. Neither sheep, trees, nor fruit can survive without their providers. In the same way, agriculture (or each and every one of us for that matter) cannot stand without God. In Romans 1:20, Paul talks about how God’s “invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen” throughout all that He has created. I believe that as farmers and agriculturists, we experience this firsthand through our labors and pursuits within this amazing industry. Despite the abundance of different sectors there are in agriculture today, I believe that God reveals himself in each one uniquely. I don’t know about your experiences within this industry; however, I can tell you about one thing that I’ve learned through mine and explain what God has shown me through it.

I was born into the fourth generation of beef cattle farmers on my family’s farm in Upper Tract, West Virginia. Ever since I can remember, my dad would take me along with him to help with whatever jobs that needed to be done or projects that needed to be completed. Whether it was rolling out bales of hay for the cattle in the brutal cold of those dreaded winter months or tagging calves in the warm green landscape of early spring, I was right there with him along for the ride. Every day that we were out in the pastures and fields striving to leave the land, herd, and the farm better than it was the day before. However, even though we thought that we were just working hard to get that day’s work completed, God was in many ways using it in a much bigger way to not only reveal Himself to us but to lead us closer to Himself as well.

One topic that God opened my eyes on throughout the past few years is control. A simple word, but a powerful one. It’s something that we enjoy having, whether it be over our time, our finances, or ourselves. Without it, we feel powerless and almost like a ship without sails being tossed around in the ocean. We don’t like being surprised by events outside of our control, we want to be responsible for everything that takes place. However, the one thing about the agricultural industry that sets it apart from every other industry is the lack of control within it. For many 9-5 jobs, you are almost always guaranteed a paycheck as long as you follow the boss’s orders and put forth effort. Farming isn’t like that though. Agriculture consists of factors like drought, storms, diseases, predators, pests, etc. that can come into play and jeopardize the success of an
A gardener could do everything right with his or her garden, such as creating an accurate crop schedule and applying the correct amount of fertilizer, but a flood could ever-so-easily come through and take out the entire crop. Another example is that a farmer could think that he or she has a plan for feeding the cattle hay throughout the winter by baling hay in the summer, until massive amounts of rain cause the hay field to be too muddy to drive a tractor through it, leaving him or her scrambling to find alternative feed sources for the winter.

Although it can jeopardize our year-to-year success, this lack of control within agriculture is also a blessing. As farmers, we must rely fully and totally on God every day of every year to provide us with what we need to have a successful growing season. This strengthens our faith and builds our trust in Him. Without faith, the stress of an agriculturist would be unbearable. That’s why when I’m asked why agriculture tends to have a higher percentage of people who claim to be religious than other industries, my response is that for this type of work that has this much on the line, your faith must be in something so much more than yourself, it must be in God. I believe that farmers must wake up many days, especially the difficult ones, living their lives like Proverbs 3:5, “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”

There have been several times on our farm where God reminded us of who truly is in control, whether it was having an abnormally large number of cows open after breeding season or having blossom-end rot devastate our anticipated tomato crop. I’m sure almost every agriculturist can think of many times when they have felt the same way. However, this is why it is crucial to stay faithful in the fields, knowing that no matter what happens, God is with us and is doing everything for His greater plan and purpose. Jesus says in Matthew 6:25-26, “For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?” I promise you, you are worth much more than any bird. He cares for you, lean into Him today in every area of your life and in every area of your operation.
We held our annual Fall Farm Tour on October 14 in Monongalia County. We’d like to thank Mountaintop Beverage, On Eagles Wings Therapeutic Horsemanship, and Pike Mountain Farm for taking the time, on a Saturday, to host us and do tours of their facilities and farms.

At Mountaintop Beverage we got to hear the history of the company, why they chose Morgantown, WV, and take tours of the facility to see the process and packaging of the shelf-stable beverages.

On Eagles Wings uses equine-assisted therapies to enhance the lives of those with disabilities. We got to see the arenas, meet all the horses (including Maverick who helped Stephanie give the tour), and learn why this center is so important to the community.

At Pike Mountain Farm we got to see how this family-run farm is able to profit while still being a smaller farm. They raise pigs, lambs, turkeys, and chickens all on pasture and sell the meat at the farmer’s market, off the farm, and through CSA boxes. Tyler was also gracious enough to pull our raffle drawing winner for us at the end of the tour!

We had a great crowd even though it was calling for rain all day and luckily the rain held off for most of the tour! See you all next year!
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NRCS Conservation Corner

Getting Started with NRCS
— submitted by Rebecca Haddix, NRCS-WV Public Affairs Specialist

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps people help the land through scientifically based, locally led voluntary conservation efforts. NRCS offers programs to eligible landowners and agricultural producers to help manage natural resource concerns while providing environmental benefits.

Through these programs, NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns to help save energy, improve soil, water, plant, air, animal and related resources on agricultural lands and non-industrial private forest land.

Together, NRCS and producers invest in solutions that conserve natural resources for the future while improving agricultural operations.

Getting Started with NRCS

Schedule a Farm Visit. To get started with NRCS call or visit your local USDA Service Center to set up an appointment.

How to Prepare

What is your vision for your land and farm? What are your challenges? Prepare a list of questions and concerns for your NRCS conservation specialist.

What to Expect

An NRCS team member will visit your property and ask about your goals for your land and help you develop a plan to obtain them. During the farm visit we will discuss conservation planning and what financial and technical support is available for you.

Who is Eligible?

Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who own or rent agricultural land are eligible. NRCS assistance can be used on all types of agricultural operations, including:
- Conventional and organic
- Specialty crops and commodity crops
- Forestry and wildlife
- Historically underserved farmers including beginning, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and military veterans.
- Livestock operations

An NRCS team member will visit your property and ask about your goals for your land and help you develop a plan to obtain them. Pictured here are NRCS-WV’s Northern Panhandle District Conservationist, Katie Fitzsimmons with local producer, Britney Hervey-Farris of Family Roots Farm near Wellsburg, West Virginia.
NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to eligible producers to conserve and enhance soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land.

Learn how we can develop a plan tailored to your land and your goals!

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Enjoy a Healthy Holiday Seasoned with Love

by Dana Wright, WVU Extension Agent – Logan and Mingo Counties

With the holiday season quickly approaching, we are filled with the anticipation of spending time with friends and loved ones, making some of our most treasured memories. This most wonderful time of the year is often filled with goodies galore, and feasts abound; however, a little less welcome are the calories that come with the overindulgence in those carb-laden meals and delicious candies. According to an article published in “The New England Journal of Medicine,” the average adult gains one pound of weight during the holiday season. While that doesn’t seem like a lot, it is much more difficult to burn 3,500 calories than it is to consume them. Coupled with the fact that as we age our metabolism slows down and it becomes harder to lose those extra pounds, it serves us well to be proactive in implementing our holiday weight management skills.

Here are some ideas that may help you dash away from those extra holiday calories without sacrificing flavor:

- When preparing your recipes, swap out high-fat ingredients for lower calorie ingredients when possible. Use low-sodium, fat-free chicken broth in dishes like mashed potatoes and dressing.
- When prepping mashed potatoes, dice the potatoes and place them in cold water overnight to allow much of the starch to drain. Transfer the potatoes to another bowl and rinse well before boiling.
- Use fresh herbs and spices to flavor meats and dishes to cut down on salt but not flavor.
- Savor the flavor of foods by eating slowly and mindfully, paying close attention to the sensations that each food produces.
- Serve dinner on smaller plates. Eating is as much a visual experience as a physical one. When we fill our plates (regardless of plate size), our minds are satisfied once we have eaten all our food. It doesn’t matter if you fill a 9-inch plate or a 13-inch plate, your brain will believe it is full after eating both. Shave those extra inches off your plate to avoid adding inches to your waistline.
- Fill your plate with non-starchy vegetables, like green beans and carrots. These foods are low-calorie and help keep hunger at bay.
- Take a 10-minute break between dinner and eating dessert to give your stomach time to let your brain know if it needs more food.
- Avoid the temptation to skip breakfast on the days you know you’re planning to eat a holiday meal. Eating a nutritious breakfast prevents you from overeating at meals later in the day.
- Consider substituting whole-grain ingredients in muffins and breads.
- Choosing low-fat cheeses, sour cream, and milk ingredients in your dishes is an easy way to cut back on unhealthy fat and calories.
- Consider preparing dessert dishes using sugar-free alternatives. This will allow both diabetic and nondiabetic guests to enjoy something sweet. These dishes are sure to be a hit among all partygoers.
- Conversation is calorie-free. Use mealtimes as an opportunity to spend time with loved ones, reminisce with old friends, and enjoy the company of others; however, be aware and stay vigilant that this time is not used to indulge in high-calorie foods.

Food is a big part of our culture, symbolizing our love and connectedness to one another. Preparing food that is grown by our own hands and seasoned with love is part of what makes the holidays so special and memorable. We wish you and your family a healthy holiday season!
SNYDER BLACKSMITH SCULPTURE

Since 1971 Mike Snyder ironwork is hand-forged and welded by hammer and coal fire. No power tools are used. Some bases are 1700s Shenandoah Valley hewn chestnut log cabin beams showing broadaxe marks, others are black locust.

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West Virginia Farm Bureau News
Supporting Agribusinesses Through the Holidays

by Dee Singh-Knights, WVU Extension Specialist – Agricultural Economics

As national supply chains suffered bottlenecks during the COVID-19 pandemic, local agribusinesses continued to provide essential services for their communities, despite difficult circumstances. Now, it is your turn to support these businesses to help them weather the current economic downturn and strengthen their operations for future growth.

Your support is a win-win for you and your local community. It helps nourish small family agribusinesses, keeping them working and thriving, and they in turn provide you with local products and adventures to nourish your bodies and your mind. Your sales taxes help fund vital community services, and small businesses are more likely to spend money locally to buy the supplies they need, which further strengthens the whole community.

Local agribusinesses often carry distinctive products, which helps showcase the community’s distinctive localness or regional image. As we continue to be bombarded by mass-marketing during the holidays, local agribusinesses offer the opportunity to give a unique gift that shows pride in your local community. Shopping locally also reaffirms your commitment to the environment, as these local products usually have a lower carbon footprint.

Some local products cost more because they are limited production or hand-crafted products. Consumers should not expect businesses to lower or apologize for their prices as this is often the businesses’ dignity price – a fair price that reflects the true cost of producing small batches of distinctive products and allows the entrepreneur to earn a fair wage. Local businesses are passionate about their businesses, which often contributes to more personal customer service that is often missing from your big-box stores. Sometimes, you may even be lucky to find that prices at local businesses are better because they don’t have the overhead that larger stores may have. Help encourage these businesses to stay afloat by supporting them and encouraging your friends and family to do the same.

Because of high-tunnel production or favorable weather conditions, some farms may still have a good inventory of fresh products for gifts or your holiday meals. Others may have meat or value-added products, like maple products, honey, jams and jellies, or craft drinks, that you could purchase. Even businesses without in-season products to sell may be participating in the season of giving. Look for opportunities to gift subscriptions to next year’s CSA programs, agritourism seasonal passes, or gift certificates for next year’s farmers markets or farm-store. There might also be opportunities through local farms to donate a CSA subscription or purchase fresh foods and meats that will be sent to families in need.

There are several ways to find these wild and wonderfully unique agribusinesses across the state – check out WVU Extension’s Local Foods Finder Map, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture’s West Virginia Grown Directory, and the West Virginia Farm and Food Coalition’s FarmFreshWV resources.
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Elderberries: A Culinary and Medicinal Favorite

by Lewis Jett, WVU Extension Specialist – Commercial Horticulture

A native plant with many uses, elderberries have become one of the most popular and profitable culinary and medicinal plants. The American elder (Sambucus canadensis) is a woody perennial found across Appalachia, usually in low areas. Because elderberries do not compete well with other taller forest plants, they are often seen as an edge plant typically found along fence rows, on the edges of woods, or in riparian areas close to creeks or rivers.

**Description**

Elderberry bushes can reach 6 to 15 feet in height and grow new canes each year. These new canes flower and produce an abundance of fruit. The elderberry fruit is shiny and dark, ripening in August and September on a flat, umbrella-shaped flower called a cyme. The fruit is high in vitamins A and C, as well as phosphorus, potassium, and iron. Elderberries have been documented to reduce the chances of catching a cold or the flu by enhancing the overall immune system. Both the fruit and flowers have culinary uses as ingredients in teas, wine, baked goods, jams, and jellies. The berries also can be dried or juiced to be sold as a wholesale product.

**Economic Value**

Since West Virginia is approximately 80% forested with mountainous topography, plants that grow wild on otherwise fallow, non-timber areas are potentially profitable to landowners. Chris Yura, located in Lewis County, West Virginia, is pursuing the value-added potential...
of elderberries in West Virginia. As he notes, elderberries have a strong worldwide demand and can be sourced across the state; however, the nonuniform ripening of wild varieties and limited processing infrastructure are challenges.

Cultivated Elderberries

One option to supplement the supply from wild sources would be to grow elderberries as cultivated plants. There are differences in fruit quality and yield between cultivated varieties and native plants. Cultivated elderberries ripen more uniformly, are sweeter, and have higher per-plant marketable yields. Many states have begun commercial, cultivated elderberry production given the significant demand for the crop.

Recommended varieties of cultivated elderberries include ‘Adams 1 and 2,’ ‘Nova,’ ‘Johns’ and ‘York,’ which can be purchased from reputable nurseries. Some nurseries also sell European elderberry varieties, such as ‘Samyl’ and ‘Samdal,’ which are larger plants that produce significantly more fruit.

Each elderberry plant should be spaced 6 feet apart with 12 feet between rows. Cultivated, or tame, elderberries should be planted in areas with sufficient soil drainage, full sun, and a pH of 5.5 to 6.5. To encourage greater root development, flowers are removed (or harvested) in the establishment year. Fruit harvest can begin the second year. Because birds can be attracted to elderberry fruit, bird netting may be needed.

Wild Elderberries

Wild elderberries are easy to establish in the ideal growing environments. Clones of wild elderberry plants have the advantage of being established and adapted to West Virginia’s native environment. These plants can be propagated as either softwood or hardwood cuttings.

When propagating, select healthy plants with desirable fruit quality. As Yura observed, it’s possible that a native clone from West Virginia has significantly more nutrients and health benefits than cultivated varieties grown from other regions.

The 2021 West Virginia Small Farm Conference will have additional information on elderberry production, processing, and marketing for those who desire more information on this potentially profitable crop.
Photo Submission

Pendleton County Rainbow

by Joy Snyder Ragland
A True Story About the Best Farm Dog We Ever Had
by Randall McCauley, Philippi, WV

In the late 1940’s, most farms had a dog. They weren’t pets, they were true working dogs. Our dog, Mack, was an average-sized farm collie with a dark red coat and typical white markings. Mack would get the cows in at milking time and get the horses in to get harnessed for the day. He would clear the groundhogs from the fields and keep the foxes away from the chickens. But his favorite job was watching for two-legged thieves near the meat house!

Mack never barked, which worked great on thieves and groundhogs. A strong, courageous virtue was an asset in those days. So much for the cute and polite stuff...

I’ve trained dogs for 35 years. Some were fear biters, some had mental problems, but Mack was the meanest S. O. B. I have ever seen. My Dad, Deb McCauley, was the only man or beast that could get close to Mack without being attacked. We lived with my grandparents, George “Chic” and Lora Nestor Mitchell. They didn’t even mess with him. I was about six years old when I put a draft horseshoe on his neck and was attacked. Luckily, my Dad was close by in the cow barn. I still have scars on my arm from that attack!

Mack killed a female Great Dane three times his size that got too close to our property. A year later, he killed two of the neighbor’s dogs at the same time, which were both bigger than him! About a year after that, he killed another neighbor’s cat which created a family feud that lasted from then on until everyone had passed away.

We sold milk to Carnation at that time and Mack was a great asset at 4 AM. We had an outside rack for the milk buckets and all we had to do was rattle them. The cows came running to the barn! Mack was too rough on any new cow, but she soon learned.

Dad was a horse trader who liked mules. He had just bought a large team of work mules and kept them in the bull lot for a few days. Some of us folks know a mule can kick a foot farther than a horse. Mack did not... While playing near the bull lot around noon one day, I saw one of the mules kick Mack in the head. He laid motionless all afternoon. I had already learned not to approach him, but I kept an eye on him. To my surprise, just before Dad got home from the coal mine, he managed to get up and stagger around the bull lot. He was OK by the time Dad came home from work.

My parents raised Bulldogs back in those days and a bitch in heat was pinned up in an outbuilding. Early that morning I had a 24” bicycle that I had to use a bucket to stand on to mount. As I was getting on the bike, Mack went between my leg and the bike. This was very strange! Mack stayed away from everyone and everyone stayed away from him. Later that day, he killed our male Bulldog and some chickens. In his rage, he also killed two hogs. Something had to be done! My grandfather tried to tie him up. He got bit really badly on his wrist and hand. I remember it bled profusely! When Dad got home, he tied him up in the woodshed and set out to assess all the damage that had been done that day. (That old woodshed still stands today!)

We had bought a freezer or refrigerator, I can’t remember which. It was shipped in a wooden crate held together with large nails. The empty crate had been put in the woodshed. When Dad came back to the woodshed, he discovered Mack had attacked the crate frame! He had protruding nails through his mouth, nose, and lower jaw. He knew it was the end of the road for the best farm dog we ever had. The instant Dad shot him, his eyes turned the weirdest green I have ever seen. I had nightmares for weeks.

On the lighter side, when Dad would drink too much, he would tell my grandfather, “Get your shaving cream! Let’s go to the barn and lather up like you have the ‘phobia’!” So, the question still remains today...Did Mack have rabies or was he just mad because he couldn’t get to his girlfriend?
Recipe Possibilities

Traditional Oven Roasted Turkey

(National Turkey Federation) Take a walk down memory lane with classic oven roasted turkey this Thanksgiving. Get the perfect oven roasted turkey with this simple and delicious recipe. The meat stays juicy and tender every time!

INGREDIENTS:

1 (12 to 14 lb) Whole turkey fresh or frozen, thawed
1 Large onion, quartered
1 lemon quartered
3 Whole bay leaves
2 tsp salt
1 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp black pepper
2 sprigs rosemary
2 sprigs sage
2 sprigs thyme
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 sprigs thyme
2 sprigs rosemary
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 sprigs thyme
2 sprigs sage
2 cloves garlic, crushed

HERB BUTTER RUB:

8 tbsp butter, room temperature
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tbsp fresh sage, minced
2 tbsp fresh thyme, minced
1 tbsp fresh rosemary, minced
Salt and Pepper

PREPARATION:

Remove turkey from the fridge and let stand at room temperature for at least 30 minutes before baking.
Remove the neck and giblets from the turkey
Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
In a small bowl mix together salt, black pepper and garlic powder. Sprinkle on the inside cavity of the turkey to season.
Place the quartered onion, lemon, bay leaves, sage, rosemary, thyme and garlic into the turkey.
Bring the legs together and tie together with string.
Tuck the tips of the wings under the turkey.
In a small food processor mix together butter, garlic, sage, thyme and rosemary until well blended.
Generously season the outside of the entire turkey with salt and pepper.
Use your fingers rub the butter mixture evenly over the turkey until it is well coated.
Place the turkey in a roasting pan with about 1 cup of water in the bottom.
Bake for 30 minutes until the skin is golden, then reduce the temperature to 350 and cook for an additional 2 1/2 hours. Total cooking time will vary based on the size of your turkey, but count on about 15 minutes per pound.
Remove turkey from the oven and tent with foil for 20 minutes before slicing to serve.

Do you have a favorite family recipe?

Email it to ronw@wvfarm.org and we will try to include it in the WV Farm Bureau News. Don’t forget to include the name of dish, description, ingredients, instructions, and a photo if possible.
Come Sit a Spell

Monthly Puzzles with a Few Words of Country Wisdom Tossed in fer Good Measure!

Theme: The 1940's

ACROSS
1. Sylvester Stallone's "____ King" 6. And so forth, abbr.
30. Edible corn part 35. Functions 37. *____ Strip on Mediterranean Sea, 1948
39. Roman goddess, patroness of hunters 40. *Moscow ____ cocktail, created in 1940s
41. Beach souvenir 43. Inspiring horror 44. Not long
46. Home to Bryce Canyon 47. Smoothie bowl flavor 48. Become available (2 words)
50. Links hazard 52. Mozart's "L'____ del Cairo" 53. Back of the neck
55. Transgression 57. *Carmen of "The Gang's All Here," established 1945
58. Bear of bamboo forest 59. Barbecued anatomy 60. Birds
65. Part of cathedral 66. Number on a birthday cake
68. Battle royal 69. What divots and divas have in common 70. Not o'er

DOWN
15. Tied the knot 20. *Leopold III of Belgium and Christian X of Denmark, e.g.
34. a.k.a. vampire 36. Espied 38. a.k.a. Daminiozide
42. ____ Apso 45. Tornado visual 49. Helicopter landing
51. Coal miners 54. Bear of bamboo forest 56. Brother's daughter
57. Gangster's gal 58. Bear of bamboo forest 61. Gangster's gal
62. Battle royal 63. Bear of bamboo forest 64. Bear of bamboo forest
67. *"The ____ Sleep," 1946
68. Battle royal 69. Denigrating statement 70. What divots and divas have in common
71. Audience's approval 72. Lad's counterpart
73. Number on a birthday cake
74. Not o'er

"Jingle Bells," the Christmas song written in 1837 by James Lord Pierpont, was originally titled "One Horse Open Sleigh." The song was meant to be a Thanksgiving tune. It was reprinted in 1859, but the name was changed to "Jingle Bells," or the One Horse Open Sleigh," and was prescribed for Christmas. According to a 2015 Harris Poll, 81 percent of Americans prefer Thanksgiving meal leftovers to the meal itself. According to Roto-Rooter, the day after Thanksgiving is the busiest day of the year. 50 million Americans watch the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade every year. Another 3.5 million people view it in person.

Did You Know?

By the numbers...In 2021, U.S. total turkey production was tallied at 216.5 million birds raised, equaling 5.558 billion pounds. Of that, 549 million pounds of U.S. turkey was exported globally with 450 million pounds going to Mexico. In the US, 44 million turkeys were served at Thanksgiving alone.

October 2023 Solution
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