

News Release

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APPLE TREE PLANTING TO HONOR FALLEN WV SOLDIERS

West Virginia's Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture and Zion Heritage Farm are teaming up to honor the 36 military men and one woman who died in the line of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan Wars since the September 11, 2001 attacks. The fallen warriors will be remembered during a tree planting ceremony on Saturday, April 25, at Zion Heritage Farm in Fairmont at 2 p.m.

A section of the orchard will serve as a memorial garden. An apple tree will be planted in honor of each military member as a celebration of their lives, their bravery, and their contribution and ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

The families of these Gold Star recipients will be in attendance. They will each select a tree for their loved one and place dog tags on the tree of their choice. Veterans, active duty military and community volunteers will be on hand to help plant the trees in a section of the farm that will be open year-round to family members. During harvest time, they can pick fruit from their tree.

West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick is scheduled to attend and the public is invited.

West Virginia Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture is a project of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture that encourages and supports veterans and their families to transition back into civilian life by embracing farming. Veterans are eligible to receive specialized training, hands-on assistance and supplies to grow crops, raise honeybees and other agriculture pursuits.

A majority of the trees at Zion Heritage Farm are heritage apples, like the Grimes Golden. For more information about the event, contact Jennifer Smith, WVDA Media Specialist at 304-558-3708 or jensmith@wvda.us.