

News Release

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WVDA OFFERING SAFE FOOD PRODUCTION CLASS SEPT. 12 IN CHARLESTON

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) will offer a Good Handling Practices/Good Agricultural Practices (GHP/GAP) class Sept. 12 in Charleston, to help West Virginia food producers protect consumers from food-borne illnesses.

The class will be held at the Guthrie Agricultural Center in Building 2, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Cost of the class is \$25 and includes several handout materials. The class prepares producers for a GHP/GAP audit.

While neither the classes, nor the audits, are required by the state, some wholesalers and institutions require suppliers to have GHP/GAP certification. Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick says the program also gives participants an advantage over producers that don't have GHP/GAP certification.

“A key component to “growing growers” in the state of West Virginia is to increase the marketability of our products. GHP/GAP certification is the first step in taking agriculture in our state to the next level,” said Commissioner Helmick. “Although currently voluntary, certification would be extremely beneficial to any grower who would like to enter the wholesale/larger retail market. It is our goal to see West Virginia grown products not only in all our local homes, restaurants and institutions, but across the United States and beyond. GHP/GAP certification can help us achieve that goal.”

For more registration information, contact Melissa Beller at 304-558-2210 or mbeller@wvda.us. For more information on the GHP-GAP process, contact Cindy Bailey at 304-558-3200 or cbailey@wvda.us.