

# The Market Bulletin

[www.wvagriculture.org/](http://www.wvagriculture.org/)



Walt Helmick, Commissioner

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## Walt's View

## Crop initiative moving forward

As we once again wind down the traditional production season for vegetables and fruits in our state we find ourselves here at the WVDA moving forward on a number of fronts as we continue our commitment to growing Agriculture in West Virginia.

During the month of October we will be processing West

Virginia grown potatoes at our farm in Huttonsville and during the remainder of the fall those "From These Hills" potatoes will be bagged and distributed to our state operated correctional facilities as well as being made available to our schools and at various farmers markets for purchase by the public. For a list of sites where you can purchase these West Virginia Grown potatoes you can visit our website at [www.wvagriculture.org](http://www.wvagriculture.org) after October 15.

In the meantime, we are excited to begin this process of aggregation and will continue to expand it for potatoes and other crops in 2015. We have identified Huntington as one regional site for opening an aggregation center next year and will be pinpointing other areas across the state for similar facilities.

You may ask why aggregation? Well it is quite simple. In West Virginia we've got to start doing what is needed to feed ourselves better than we are right now. It's back to that \$6 billion opportunity folks. We annually consume more than \$7.3 billion in food yet we only grow less than \$700 million. It's up to us to take the initiative and act...and that's just what we intend to do.

We also can't be satisfied with just growing more crops during the spring and summer – it has to be year-round.

I've looked at how our neighboring states with similar climates, like Pennsylvania and parts of Maryland, Virginia and Ohio approach indoor growing and the comparisons in what they are producing and what we are doing are substantial.

Those states average growing in excess of \$300 million indoors annually while we are at \$26 million, with \$18 million of that being flowers. We've simply got to do better and I am strongly backing the construction of some demonstrational high tunnels and greenhouses in order to educate not only our existing farmers but also our younger generation in our schools and those adults that want to explore this opportunity.

Along with boosting production comes the need to preserve the product that isn't going to be immediately consumed. That has led us into in number of areas that we are also aggressively pursuing including canning and mobile livestock processing.

We are currently developing plans to begin building these types of facilities to show that indeed it can be done right here in West Virginia and we will keep you updated as the projects progress.

Once we are up and running I am confident that during the next couple of years the private sector will get fully on board and will take advantage of this tremendous economic development opportunity.

Agriculture can truly be a substantial part of our future economy in West Virginia and I intend to do everything I can to show that a good living can be earned in our business if people are willing to work hard and take pride in helping to feed fresh, healthy, locally grown food to our residents.

I hope to see many of you during my continued travels across the Mountain State. Until next month I remain your faithful servant.

## Longtime sheep shearer hits record number at State Fair



See more State Fair photos on page 2

A packed arena at the State Fair of WV saw Rev. Calvin McCutcheon, 77, of Buckhannon, shear his 100,000th sheep. Pictured above, from left: Wife Sandra McCutcheon, Rev. McCutcheon, friend Elwood Williams, Rita Helmick and Commissioner Helmick.



# STATE FAIR DRAFT PULL



**First-place: John Bowen (driver) of Mechanicsville, MD, with draft team Burt and Barney.**



**Second-place: Ed Rodgers (driver) of Mechanicsville, MD, with draft team Duke and Mutt.**



**Third-place: Joe Jones (driver) of Proctorville, NC and his draft team of Rock and King (not pictured).**



## CSX and the Conservation Fund Improve Access to Healthy Food for Youth in West Virginia

*Voucher program provides access to fresh fruits and vegetables for 5,000 children and families in five counties*

In West Virginia, one in five children does not have reliable access to sufficient food – especially healthy food – due to limited financial resources, lack of transportation and other factors. But CSX and The Conservation Fund are working to improve food security in these at-risk communities through a program that provides increased access and funding for healthy foods for hundreds of children and families living below the poverty line in five of the state’s lowest income counties: Calhoun, McDowell, Mingo, Roane and Wirt.

CSX, a leading provider of rail-based transportation services, and The Conservation Fund, a national nonprofit dedicated to finding conservation solutions that balance environmental and economic needs, teamed up to provide fresh food vouchers to children that can be redeemed at local farmers markets for fresh fruits and vegetables.

“Food security is one of the most pressing issues facing our children, and one that directly impacts their overall health and well-being,” said Kris Hoellen, Vice President of Sustainable Programs for The Conservation Fund. “Access to fresh produce with an opportunity to teach children how food goes from the farm to the table gives these children – and their families – the opportunity for a long-term healthy lifestyle. We applaud CSX for investing in the future of West Virginia.”

On August 21, West Virginia Department of Agriculture Communications Director Buddy Davidson visited the Falls River Elementary School mobile farmers market in McDowell County to see firsthand how the voucher program benefits local children and families.

“Food security is a critical issue for many West Virginians, and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture is pleased to be working with CSX and the Conservation Fund to help our citizens eat fresh, healthy, locally grown produce,” said West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick. “This is a benefit not just to the participants, but also to our farmers. We have a huge economic opportunity to grow our state’s economy from within by producing more of what we consume.”

Throughout the five counties, the vouchers are being distributed by libraries, elementary schools and summer programs like Energy Express, an award-winning summer reading and nutrition program for children living in West Virginia’s rural and low-income communities. Families in Mingo County will also be able to use the vouchers at a mobile farmers market, which will visit seven communities within the county to help those without access to transportation. In McDowell County, some children will be able to redeem their vouchers right at their school. One thousand children from each county will receive vouchers this summer and fall.

The following farmers markets are already participating in the voucher program:

- Amma Farmers Market
- Spencer Farmers Market
- Calhoun County Farmers Market
- Grantsville Farmers Market
- Elizabeth Farmers Market
- Williamson Farmers Market
- and 4 elementary schools in McDowell County

Through additional funding from the program, these farmers markets will team up with the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to provide cooking demonstrations and distribute recipes and information on cooking, storing and preparing fresh, seasonal food. This will provide opportunities for kids to sample and become familiar with new foods, so that they can incorporate them into their eating habits and their parents can learn how to prepare and cook healthy food.

**“West Virginia is an integral part of both the history and future of CSX, and CSX is committed to investing in its neighbors here by delivering information and access to healthy food and nutrition,”** said Tori Kaplan, Assistant Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility, CSX. **“This partnership with The Conservation Fund supports our mission to help West Virginia communities live greener, healthier and safer lives.”**

# Farm fresh goodness with Chef Dale Hawkins

Jean Smith, Director, WVDA Marketing & Development Division

Fish Hawk Acres' owner and operator Dale Hawkins will say it all day long – fresh, fresh, fresh! Over the years, Chef Hawkins has continually promoted the use of fresh, local ingredients as key to making the most delicious dishes. So when he demonstrated in the Ag Annex at the State Fair of WV, it was no different. Hawkins came with beautiful heirloom tomatoes, homegrown jalapenos, eggplant, squash, cucumbers, onions and herbs and created three incredibly fresh and delicious dishes.

As the local food lifestyle continues to grow, please remember to check out one of the many farm markets or stands across the state.

You may be surprised at the great variety of items to choose from. For a complete list of farmers' markets, visit [wvagriculture.org](http://wvagriculture.org).



Above: Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick and wife Rita help Chef Dale Hawkins hand out samples of his Ratatouille during the State Fair of WV.



## FARM TO SCHOOL INSTAGRAM CONTEST!

In celebration of National Farm to School Month, tell us what Farm to School means to you through the WV Farm to School INSTAGRAM contest! How does it work?

1. Follow @wvfarm2school on Instagram (and be sure to LIKE us on Facebook to see contest updates and winner announcements).
2. Take photos of what Farm to School means to you.
3. Upload your pictures to Instagram and include #wvfarm2school and @wvfarm2school in the caption. (Note: Make sure your settings are set to "public" so people can see your great photos).
4. Share your photos and encourage people to vote with "likes."
5. Entries will be accepted until October 17. A committee will select the top three photos. Winners will be announced by November 1 and will receive cash prizes! (1st Place: \$100, 2nd Place: \$50, 3rd Place: \$25)

We can't wait to see all the great things you are doing around West Virginia!

### Recipes

## Ratatouille

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2½ pounds tomatoes (4 large)</li> <li>8 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced</li> <li>1 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley</li> <li>20 fresh basil leaves, torn in half</li> <li>1 cup plus 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil</li> <li>1 2-pound eggplant, cut into 1-inch cubes</li> <li>2¼ teaspoons salt</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 large onions (1½ lbs. total), quartered lengthwise and thinly sliced crosswise</li> <li>3 assorted bell peppers (green, red, and/or yellow; 1½ lbs. total), cut into 1-inch pieces</li> <li>4 medium zucchini (2 lbs.), quartered lengthwise and cut crosswise into ¾-inch-thick pieces</li> <li>½ teaspoon black pepper</li> </ul> |
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Peel the tomatoes and coarsely chop.

In a large heavy-bottomed pan add olive oil and heat. Add peppers, onions, garlic, zucchini, eggplant and simmer for approximately 45 minutes or until vegetables are very tender. Add salt, pepper and fresh parsley and basil. Cool uncovered and serve warm or at room temperature.

### Recipes

## Tomato Cucumber Salad with Rice Wine Vinegar

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 large heirloom tomatoes, peeled, and cut into 1 inch chunks</li> <li>1 large cucumber, peeled, seeded and sliced</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 large sweet onion, peeled, halved and sliced</li> <li>4 tablespoons fresh dill, chopped</li> <li>½ cup seasoned rice wine vinegar</li> <li>1 tablespoon kosher salt</li> <li>1 tablespoon freshly ground pepper</li> </ul> |
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Toss all ingredients together and serve.

### Recipes

## Pico de Gallo

- 1 pound tomatoes, seeded and finely diced
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- ¼ cup finely chopped white onion
- 1 small fresh jalapeno, finely chopped, including seeds
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice
- ½ teaspoon salt

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl. Season to taste with additional chili, lime juice and salt as desired.

This salsa keeps in the fridge for up to one day.

# Black Walnut Toxicity

Michael C. Arnold, Plant Regulatory Officer, WVDA Plant Industries Division

Walnut is a native tree and common throughout West Virginia with the exception of our highest elevations. Although it thrives in the forest setting it is often found in pastures, bottom land, and yards which makes it easily located in most counties of the state.

Black walnut, *Juglans nigra*, and butternut, *Juglans cinerea*, secrete a chemical known as juglone into the soil that deters many plant species from flourishing in close proximity. This process is known as allelopathy. Other members of the walnut family, *Juglandaceae*, produce the chemical in lesser amounts and do not generally have the effect on competing plant life that walnut and butternut trees do.

Juglone is found in all parts of the tree with the highest concentration found in the roots and walnut hulls. The most inhospitable place for another plant to survive is within the drip edge of the tree since the chemical builds up in the soil beneath the canopy. As the tree grows the root zone expands and the area that is affected increases as well. The toxic zone of a mature walnut tree is usually a circle with a 50 to 60 foot radius measured from the trunk of the tree. The radius can be increased to 80 feet in extreme cases.

Plants are sensitive to the presence of walnut in varying degrees (see Table 1) while damage may involve lack of vitality, yellowing, wilting and even death. Extremely susceptible plants, such as tomatoes, can show signs of damage and die within a few days. Many plants commonly found in gardens and landscapes are susceptible to this type of damage so it is not advisable to

plant in close proximity to walnut trees. Leaves, bark, and wood chips will also release juglone and can affect areas where mulch is used. Also, the roots of a severed walnut tree will produce the chemical for years so simply removing the tree does not always remove the problem. Once damage has occurred, it is generally thought of as being irreversible, so relocating the plant will not completely alleviate the problem.

Although walnut trees can be harmful to other plants, there are many beneficial traits including quality lumber and nut production for both human and wildlife consumption. With a little pre-planning, this common WV tree can coexist with gardens and landscape plantings by locating them a sufficient distance from the stem of the tree.

In the next issue of *The Market Bulletin* we will provide an update on Thousand Cankers Disease, a disease complex that is considered a serious threat to our native black walnut trees.

If you have any questions about plants or plant problems, please contact the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, Plant Industries Division at (304) 558-2212.

Table 1: Common Plants considered susceptible to juglone.

Apple and Crabapple	<i>Malus sp.</i>
Asparagus	<i>Asparagus officinalis</i>
Azalea	<i>Azalea sp.</i>
Basswood	<i>Tilia americana</i>
Birch	<i>Betula sp.</i>
Blackberry	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium sp.</i>
Cabbage	<i>Brassica oleracea</i>
Chrysanthemum	<i>Chrysanthemum sp.</i>
Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster sp.</i>
Crocus	<i>Colchicum autumnale</i>
Eggplant	<i>Solanum melongena</i>
Hydrangea	<i>Hydrangea sp.</i>
Lilac	<i>Syringa sp.</i>
Lilies	<i>Lilium sp.</i>
Mountain Laurel	<i>Kalmia sp.</i>
Norway Spruce	<i>Picea abies</i>
Peony	<i>Paeonia sp.</i>
Pepper	<i>Capsicum annuum</i>
Petunia	<i>Petunia sp.</i>
Pines	<i>Pinus sp.</i>
Potato	<i>Solanum tuberosum</i>
Potentilla	<i>Potentilla neuamanniana</i>
Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron sp.</i>
Rhubarb	<i>Rheum rhabarbarum</i>
Silver Maple	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>
Tomato	<i>Lycopersicon esculentum</i>
Viburnum	<i>Viburnum sp.</i>
Yew	<i>Taxus sp.</i>

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Retrieved December 12, 2006, from Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs website: omafra.gov.on.ca/ca/english/crops/facts/info\_walnut\_toxicity.htm

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## WVU Extension GARDEN CALENDAR...OCT./NOV. 2014

### OCTOBER

- Oct. 1 .....Build a high tunnel.
- Oct. 2 .....Dig canna, dahlia, glads, and tubular begonia.
- Oct. 3 .....Harvest sweet potatoes.
- Oct. 4 .....Divide perennials.
- Oct. 5 .....Harvest green tomatoes and gourds before frost.
- Oct. 6 .....Harvest late pumpkins before frost.
- Oct. 7 .....Remove old crop residue and seed winter cover crop.
- Oct. 9 .....Store winter squash in cool, dry location.

- Oct. 10 .....Plant multiplier onions, plant spring bulbs.
- Oct. 11 .....Plant or transplant lilies that flower July 15- Sept. 15.
- Oct. 13 .....Seed spinach for overwintering.
- Oct. 14 .....Turn compost.
- Oct. 15 .....Seed arugula for overwintering.
- Oct. 16 .....Prepare landscape bed for spring planting.
- Oct. 17 .....Plant or transplant deciduous trees and shrubs after leaves drop.
- Oct. 18 .....Save wildflower seeds for spring planting.

- Oct. 20 .....Mow lawn for the last time.
- Oct. 21 .....Prune roses and root cuttings.
- Oct. 24 .....Plant garlic.
- Oct. 25 .....Have garden soil tested.
- Oct. 27 .....Fertilize lawn according to soil test.
- Oct. 28 .....Mulch greens (chard, collards, etc.).

### NOVEMBER

- Nov. 1 .....Remove stakes and trellises.
- Nov. 3 .....Mulch carrots for winter use.
- Nov. 4 .....Fertilize under deciduous trees and shrubs.
- Nov. 5 .....Turn compost, water trees and shrubs thoroughly if fall has been dry.

# 'W.Va. Agritourism Initiative' to help local farm operators profit from new 'value-added' opportunities

Helping local farmers create and profit from farm-based tourism opportunities is the idea behind West Virginia University Extension Service's new Agritourism Initiative – a training program for aspiring and beginning agritourism operators.

With the help of a \$30,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, WVU and industry experts will engage participants in a series of four, day-long training sessions in areas like risk-management, marketing, hospitality management and business collaborations.

"Farmers are exploring agritourism and farm-based education as an opportunity to help diversify farm income and improve cash flows," Dee Singh-Knights, WVU Extension Service agricultural economics specialist, said. "The challenge is the lack of education-specific resources and expertise to help them effectively evaluate this new opportunity."

Organizers say the program will serve as a 'one-stop-shop' for agritourism resources, helping farmers to better navigate the risk management issues arising from agritourism activities.

"The program builds on the

'entertainment' value of agritourism, to include the overlooked 'educational' value, in response to consumer demand for understanding where their food and related products comes from," Singh-Knights said.

The program is a collaboration between WVU Extension Service, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, the West Virginia Division of Tourism and West Virginia State University.

## agritourism IN WEST VIRGINIA

Participants who successfully complete the course requirements are eligible for certification as a West Virginia Agritourism Initiative Business.

Classes are limited to 20 participants in each of three locations and registration is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Cost of the entire course is \$40 and includes course materials, meals and snacks.

The classes are offered to the northern region in Morgantown at the Agricultural Science Building on WVU's Evansdale

Campus, on Nov. 1, Dec. 6, Jan. 10 and Feb. 7.

Residents in the southern part of the state can attend classes at the Emma Byrd Higher Education Center in Beaver. The class meets Nov. 8, Dec. 13, Jan. 17 and Feb. 14.

A third course option is available online. Participants in the online session work at their own pace to complete the course between Jan. 15 and March 30.

A spring capstone trip to Raleigh, North Carolina will be available to a limited number of participants who complete the course. Participants are responsible for paying for their lodging and some meals. Transportation and admissions fees for our 'classroom on wheels' are covered by grant funds.

To learn more about the course, visit [anr.ext.wvu.edu](http://anr.ext.wvu.edu). To register, you can visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wv-agritourism-and-farm-based-education-institute-tickets-12957657703>. Deadline to apply is Wed., Oct. 15.

*For more information, please contact Dee Singh-Knights at [dosingh-knights@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:dosingh-knights@mail.wvu.edu) or 304-293-7606.*

## WVU Extension Service to sponsor inaugural Women in Agriculture conference

There's a new resource for West Virginia's female farmers and farm service providers – the inaugural Women in Agriculture conference, sponsored by the West Virginia University Extension Service. The conference, Nov. 14-16 at Stonewall Resort in Roanoke, West Virginia, will give female chance to network, learn farm business and finance "best practices" and improve the skills.

Activities begin with a pre-conference tour on Friday, Nov. 14. Visits to several local farms will show participants thriving farm enterprises providing traditional agriculture products, as well as other methods to grow a farm business through agritourism initiatives like community, school and family events. A networking dinner rounds out Friday.

Saturday sessions are divided into four educational tracks – livestock, horticulture, farm finances and farm niches. With more than a dozen sessions ranging from livestock production and liability issues to marketing basics and governmental relations, participants can tailor their conference

experience to their specific needs. There will also be age-appropriate activities for youths, age 5-18 on Saturday for \$15 per child.

The weekend is designed to give farmers and farm service opportunity to gain valuable insight and skills from experts with real world experience—and to use that knowledge to build and improve their own farm operation through effective management practices.

Early bird conference registration runs through Oct. 1 and offers discounted rates of \$30 for the pre-conference farm tour, \$35 for the conference or \$55 for both. Registration fees after Oct. 1 are \$40 for the pre-conference farm tour, \$40 for the conference or \$70 for both. The conference registration deadline is Nov. 1.

Lodging is available for an additional \$99/night by calling Stonewall Resort at 304-269-7400. Attendees should mention the conference when booking.

To learn more or register, visit <http://anr.ext.wvu.edu/ag-women/wia-conference>.



# Quarter Horses arrive at Potomac State from Alabama

Potomac State College of West Virginia University and Sumiton, Ala. may be separated by several states, but a 'Grand Champion Quarter Horse' just brought them a whole lot closer together.

Potomac State is the beneficiary of a generous donation of five quarter horses, including one stallion and four mares. The horses arrived earlier this summer and were donated by Donald Rice, who serves as president and chief executive officer of Money Management Services, located in Birmingham, Ala. He is also a founding member of the National Advisors Trust Company which serves as the nation's largest advisor-created, federally chartered trust company. Additionally, Rice is the owner and operator of Double L Farm which was named after his father, L.L. Rice.

Rice and his wife, Gwen, breed and raise Quarter horses on the farm which is located in Sumiton and is considered to be a 'World Class Quarter Horse Breeding Farm.' Case in point, a two-year-old gelding which was sired by their stud and a mare on the farm, won the Quarter Horse World Championship in both the Amateur and Pro Divisions in 2011.

Additionally, the stallion they donated, 'Cooler Than All,' was named a 'Grand Champion' at one of the largest Quarter Horse shows in the United States, the All-American Quarter Horse Congress. "Cooler Than All" was also named as the 'Reserve World Champion' in the Quarter

Horse World Show.

"It was very difficult for the family to part with a horse that they've raised since birth, but I believe that future generations sired by 'Cooler Than All' will continue to grow Potomac State's herd into world-class quarter horses for generations to come," said Rice.

The donation of Quarter horses came about through a series of unexpected events. Mike Jennings, a longtime friend of Rice who serves as an experienced equine appraiser, a horse auction manager and as an American Quarter Horse Association Professional Horseman, happened to be serving as an official for the West Virginia State 4-H and FFA horse judging contest that was recently held at the Equestrian Center on the Potomac State campus. He approached Jared Miller, an equine studies instructor at Potomac State, about the potential for a donation of horses to the College.

Jennings also worked with Lucas Taylor, Director of Development at the College, who was instrumental in getting the horses to the College as well as assuring Rice that the horses would be part of an outstanding equine program at Potomac State.

These horses will be part of a hands-on, living classroom to educate students



**Jared Miller, an equine studies instructor at Potomac State College of West Virginia University, is shown with 'Cooler Than All' a World Class Quarter Horse which was donated to the College, along with four mares, by Alabama businessman Donald Rice.**

about various aspects of the equine industry. Additionally, the mares will be placed in the breeding program, two of them are already in foal for 2015.

"We're planning to stud the stallion to the public for breeding and I'm also going to place him in the West Virginia Quarter Horse Association's Breeders Futurity," said Miller.

For more information about the equine program at the College or to plan a visit to the Equestrian Center, contact Enrollment Services at 304-788-6820 or visit us at [www.potomacstatecollege.edu](http://www.potomacstatecollege.edu).

## USDA Requests Applications for Rural Child Poverty Nutrition Center

*Grant will support strategies to reduce child food insecurity in rural communities*

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced that up to \$2.5 million is available to establish the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Child Poverty Nutrition Center. This competitive grant is part of USDA's efforts to reduce childhood food insecurity in rural communities in America.

Trends show that both the overall rural poverty rate and the rural child poverty rate have exceeded rates in urban areas for over thirty years. In 2012, one out of every four children in rural areas lived in poverty, and 21.2 percent of rural households with children were food insecure. Deep poverty, defined by income that is below 50 percent of the poverty level (\$1,000 per month for a family of four in 2012) was a reality for one in eight rural children.

"The goal of the center is to reduce child food insecurity by improving access and coordination among child nutrition programs in up to 30 rural communities with

persistently high poverty rates," Vilsack said. "Children living in persistently-poor, rural areas tend to experience worse outcomes in terms of nutrition, activity, and obesity. The Rural Child Poverty Nutrition Center would facilitate innovative strategies to support a healthier next generation in rural America"

The center will develop, administer, and evaluate a series of sub-grants to improve services in these communities. The center will also organize several conferences to exchange lessons learned and develop a report on best practices. The rural communities will use their funds to target child food insecurity through greater coordination of the nutrition programs. For example, communities could use their funds to identify strategies to increase community involvement or to apply more effective uses of technology and digital media to improve program coordination.

This initiative is part of USDA's

commitment to growing economies, increasing investments, and creating opportunities in poverty-stricken rural communities. Nearly 85 percent of America's persistent poverty counties are in rural areas. The USDA Rural Child Poverty Nutrition Center will work cooperatively with USDA's Food and Nutrition Service to issue sub-grants targeting persistently poor rural counties in the 15 states with the largest number of persistently-poor counties. This initiative will target all StrikeForce states, as well as Minnesota and Missouri.

Accredited colleges and universities, as well as private and public research institutions are eligible to apply. USDA's Food and Nutrition Service will select one institution or organization for the award. A copy of the request and more information has been recently posted on [www.fns.usda.gov/ops/research-and-analysis](http://www.fns.usda.gov/ops/research-and-analysis) and [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).