

**FINAL REPORT OF THE AGRICULTURE AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
to  
Joint Committee on Government and Finance  
2017 - 2018 Interims**

***Members***

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Delegate Robert Thompson**

The Agriculture and Rural Development Committee met during the 2017-2018 Interims to discuss and study various agricultural and agribusiness issues.

**August 2017**

**Speakers:**

**Kelly Collins, Director of the WV State Fair  
Jerry Cook, Chairman of WV State Fair Board of Directors  
Tom Campbell, Board Member, WV State Fair Board of Directors  
Crescent Gallagher, Communications Director, WV Department of Agricultural  
Jacob Hill, President, WV Association of Fairs and Festivals  
Gavin Ward, Vice-President, WV Association of Fairs and Festivals**

The Committee on Agricultural and Rural Development met on Tuesday, August 22, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. in the Senate Finance Committee Room.

Representatives from around the state discussed the economic and cultural impact of the State Fair and other Fairs and Festivals with an emphasis on small business development, local food products and agriculture.

Kelly Collins, CEO of WV State Fair, addressed the Committee regarding the cultural and economic impact of the State Fair of WV. She presented a handout with facts and figures about

the State Fair. Ms. Collins stated that in 2016 the fair gave back more than \$250,000 to the state in sales tax within a ten-day span. It also has a huge cultural impact. Over 450 youth exhibitors come to the State Fair for their 4-H and FFA livestock, junior horse and pony shows. The fair spends about \$43,000 in awards presented to youth winners.

Jerry Cook, Chairman of WV State Fair Board of Directors, introduced himself.

Tom Campbell, WV State Fair Board of Directors and President of State Board of Education, addressed the Committee. He discussed the effect of early school start dates on the fair, and the positive economic impact that a later school date would have for the fair and the state. He indicated that Maryland had a positive economic impact to their state from the delay in school openings because more students and teachers could work and attend the fair. In Iowa, the Governor delayed school start dates to after its state fair because it promoted agriculture and added revenue to the state. Tourism is also affected by schools starting early. The State Board of Education has discussed this issue informally.

Crescent Gallagher, Communications Director, WV Dept. of Agriculture, addressed the Committee and discussed the Department of Agriculture's involvement and impact on the State Fair. The DAG inspects approx. 2,368 animals at the fair, and holds stakeholder meetings for WV Farmers' Markets and the Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture program.

Cassey Bowden, Director, WV Dept. of Agriculture, Business Development Division, indicated that the WV Country Store was reopened and run by the department. It had 35 "West Virginia grown" vendors with multiple products, and was successful.

Gavin Ward, Vice-President, WV Association of Fairs and Festivals, gave a presentation on the general overview of the fairs and festivals in the state, their economic impact and importance to small communities.

Cassey Bowden, Director, WV Dept. of Agriculture, Business Development Division, spoke about the Jamboree and the revenue it brought to the State.

### **September 2017**

The Joint Interim Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development met at 9:00 a.m. on September 18, 2017, in the Senate Finance Committee Room.

**Crescent Gallagher, Norm Bailey and Cassey Bowden, WV Department of Agriculture**, came before the Committee to discuss the Food Production Act: Streamlining Inspections and Regulations for producers.

**Jessica Douglas, Food Program Manager, Office of Environmental Health, DHHR**, discussed the OEHS Manufactured Food Program.

## October 2017

The Joint Interim Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development met at 8:00 a.m. on October 16, 2017, in the Senate Finance Committee Room.

### **Judy Vallandingham, Interior Director, Public Health Sanitation Division.**

Ms. Vallandingham came before the committee to present information on BPH/OEHS's roll and public health concerns as related to Grade A milk production in WV.

**Lloyd White, Administrator of Marion County Health Department, and Stanley Mills, Director of Environmental Health, Kanawha-Charleston Health Department,** discussed their involvement in food production health and safety issues on the local level.

**Casey Bowden, Director of Agriculture Business Development Division,** started to discuss the department's current involvement in food sanitation, labeling and farmers markets.

## November 2017

The Joint Interim Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development met at 9:00 a.m. on November 13, 2017, in the Senate Finance Committee Room.

### **Casey Bowden, Director of Agriculture Business Development Division.**

Ms. Bowden came before the committee to discuss the department's current involvement in food sanitation, labeling and farmers markets.

### **Brenda Keavey, Assistant Director of Regulatory Environmental Affairs Division.**

Ms. Keavey discussed the department's involvement in regulating Grade B milk products.

### **Spencer Moss, WV Food and Farm.**

Ms. Moss explained the impacts farmers market issues are having on producers around the state.

### **Clarence Christin, Registered Sanitarian.**

Ms. Christin discussed the BHP's milk inspection and training of staff.

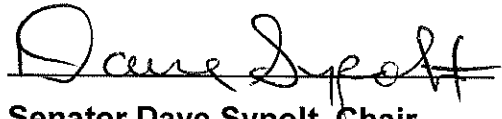
## January 2018

The Joint Interim Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development met at 4:00 p.m. on January 7, 2018, in the Senate Finance Room.

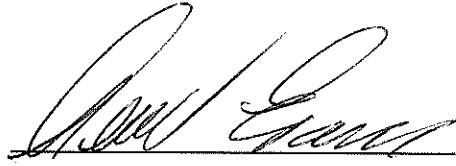
### **Noelle Starek, Counsel**

Ms. Starek presented draft legislation to the committee regarding food production issues, farmers markets changes and milk regulation.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Sypolt". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

**Senator Dave Sypolt, Chair**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Allen Evans". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

**Delegate Allen Evans, Chair**