

# West Virginia

Farm Bureau News

May 2024







# West Virginia Farm Bureau News

*The Voice of Agriculture in  
the Mountain State*

May 2024

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# Leveraging Inclusivity To Increase Sales

Presented by Dr. Shenequa Smith, Restorative Practitioner

Farmers, like people in other occupations and communities, often work through the relationships they have and the institutions they know. In this conversation, we'll get a chance to explore how you might expand beyond your traditional customer base. We'll take a look at who your customers are now, and who they could be. We'll talk through creative strategies for reaching those people, and what barriers you might need to navigate. This course will be interactive and practical.

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# Around the Dome

## Dwayne O'Dell, WVFB Director of Government Relations



Spring in West Virginia is a great time of renewal and opportunity after the winter season. I hope each of you are doing well.

Legislative interims were held in mid-April. Legislators heard presentations on assessing property at the constitutionally required level, an overview of legislation passed during the 2024 session, and a budget update, as well as other issues.

Tax collections continue to outpace revenue predictions. It appears that West Virginia is on track to collect approximately \$800 million more than the original revenue estimates. It is anticipated that Governor Justice will call a special session to address certain budget issues as well as other important topics.

The EPA has released its most recent inventory of U.S. greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The report shows that American agriculture reduced emissions by nearly 2 percent from 2021 to 2022, which is the largest reduction by any economic sector.

Agriculture represents about 10 percent of total U.S. emissions. The continued drop in agricultural emissions highlights the success and importance of voluntary and market-based programs that support the sustainable agricultural practices of farmers.

Other highlights from the report included: (1) 12 million metric ton reduction of GHG emissions, (2) 2.1 percent reduction in livestock GHG emissions, and (3) 1.7 percent reduction in crop cultivation emissions.

The largest emission source in the United States is the transportation sector at 28 percent of total emissions. Electrical power generation represents 25 percent, while the industrial sector contributes 23 percent. Beef cattle production contributed only 2.19 percent of total U.S. emissions, while agricultural soil management practices such as fertilizer application represents nearly 50 percent of all agricultural emissions.

The EPA reported that agricultural emissions are up 6.4 percent since 1990. However, we must compare this to the increase in agricultural productivity. According to the USDA Economic Research Service, today's farmers are producing three times more output per unit of input than in 1948. Actual farm acreage is down 323 million acres since 1950 which is double the size of Texas. The data clearly indicate that farmers continue

to produce more while using fewer resources and are reducing their carbon footprint with voluntary market-based incentives.

Since 1990, the U.S. population has increased by 83 million. Our farmers have met the challenge of producing not only for America but also helping to feed the rest of the world. Nearly 16 percent of all U.S. agricultural products are exported.

The EPA report also indicates that forest, grassland, and cropland all helped reduce net U.S. emissions by 13 percent. Certainly, our farmers have met the challenge and will continue to adopt technology to become even more efficient.

The USDA has decided to cancel certain livestock and crop surveys and reports. The National Agricultural Statistics Service recently announced it would no longer provide a July cattle inventory survey nor county level estimates for crops and livestock. AFBF and other agricultural organizations are asking USDA to reverse its decision, as the data is critical in order for farmers to make important planting and production decisions.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) has affected millions of birds since the outbreak in February 2022. Most recently, a Texas egg producer culled 1.6 million laying hens. The USDA, CDC, and state veterinary officials have investigated and reported HPAI in dairy cows. These factors, as well as the decline in frozen inventory of beef, pork, and poultry, have significantly affected markets for American farmers and have caused price increases for consumers. The amount of beef in cold storage is the lowest in a decade.

Certainly, 2024 is proving to be challenging. Geopolitical issues in the Middle East, cost of production, inflation, and many other factors are having major effects throughout our country. Please remember that although the future will bring challenges, as Babe Ruth said, "Never let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game."

Have a great day!





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**Alex Mooney, U.S. Congressman, 2nd Congressional District**



Washington spending is out of control. Our national debt is nearing \$35 trillion—or over \$100,000 per person—and projected to be \$55 trillion within 10 years, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Voters across this country gave Republicans the majority in the House of Representatives to be a fiscal check on this administration, after trillions were wasted on so-called pandemic relief, infrastructure, and green energy subsidies. And yet, many of my Republican colleagues sided with Democrats to pass spending bills higher than Nancy Pelosi ever could have dreamed of with little to no conservative policy wins, despite our promise to voters.

Split across two bills, Congress passed a jaw-dropping \$1.66 trillion in spending for Fiscal Year 2024, busting through the \$1.59 trillion “caps” established in the 2023 debt limit deal former Speaker Kevin McCarthy negotiated with President Joe Biden. Perhaps even worse, these spending bills did not secure the open southern border, did not prohibit Biden’s taxpayer-funded abortion and gender transition policies, did not defund the Administration’s diversity initiatives, or stop the weaponization of the Department of Justice against practicing Christians and presidential nominees, among many others. In fact, Congress kept the entire Biden agenda in place. I joined my conservative colleagues in opposing these reckless spending bills.

Just last year, the House of Representatives passed seven spending bills, with my support, which reigned in our spending and enacted conservative policies. And yet, these most recently passed spending bills, totaling thousands of pages, were negotiated behind closed doors and rushed to the floor without amendments allowed.

Is it any wonder the Bidenflation crisis continues to persist? Americans are paying more for basic needs, like gas and groceries, now more than ever. Homebuyers need to have an annual income of \$110,000 to afford a medium-priced home, which is a nearly 50% increase in just the last four years. Prices show no sign of decreasing as we pump trillions more into the economy.

Members of Congress and the President must get serious about tackling our debt crisis. As a father of

three, I find it unconscionable that America's children are inheriting this fiscal insanity. We owe it to the next generation to get our fiscal house in order—before it is too late.





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## County Corner *News from the Fifty-Five*



### Morgan County

#### Spring Member Info Meeting

At the March 28th Spring Member Info meeting, Peter Rabbit's brother, Gregory, surprised members by passing out chocolate bunnies to all in attendance.



### Preston County

#### Safety Day on Tap

The Preston County Farm Bureau will be sponsoring a Safety Day on Saturday, June 8 from 9am until 4pm at the Preston County 4-H Camp in Bruceton Mills. Activities and demonstrations will include Animal Safety, Small Hand Tools, Ladder Safety, Drug Dogs, Smoke House, Archery/Gun Safety, First Aid, ATV Safety, Tractor Safety, and Fire Truck Safety. A registration fee of \$5.00 is due by May 25 and will include lunch, snacks, a t-shirt and take-home bag. Ages 6 - 18 are encouraged to attend. Call Peggy Galloway at 304-290-7716 or Becky Shackelford at 304-288-1100.

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# From the Kitchen Table

**Pam Hessler, WVFB Women's Leadership Chair**



As I sit at the desk in my country kitchen, I look out the window watching a squirrel running up a tree, a rabbit on the ground close by, and I hear a woodpecker getting bugs from a nearby tree. My redbud trees are in full bloom, tulips blooming, birds chirping, and it all reminds me of the rebirth that God brings us every spring. Kids, grandkids, and let's not forget teachers are starting to count down the days until their summer break. While we all head into another busy season, I wanted to remind you of a few events.



## **Our Food Link/Ronald McDonald House Charities**

Since 1997, the WLC has been supporting the Ronald McDonald Houses (RMH) by collecting cash and food donations to help the families that stay at one of our three RMH across the state while their child is receiving care at the nearby hospitals. The WLC relies on the financial donations from the county farm bureaus to purchase the meat and frozen food to stock their freezers. In addition, many counties hold food collection events at their local grocery stores for non-perishable food to stock the pantry shelves. If you have never attended one of the shopping events, I want to invite you to come and help us shop and deliver the food. The shopping dates for 2024 are below. The Morgantown House is still undergoing a complete renovation and an addition that will double the size, allowing more families the opportunity to stay near their child. We have scheduled the Morgantown shopping event later this fall so they can give us a tour.

- Huntington – Thursday, June 20 – 10 am – Barboursville Kroger
- Charleston – Friday, June 21 – 10 am – Kanawha City Kroger
- Morgantown – Saturday, November 2 – 10 am – Patteson Drive Kroger

## **RMH Care Bags**

Just reminding everyone to continue to collect those travel size toiletries so we can assemble Care Bags at the annual meeting in November. These bags are given to each family when they check into the Ronald McDonald House. Last year the bags were given to the Charleston RMH. This year we will be giving these Care Bags to the Huntington RMH.

## **Ag in West Virginia Poster Contest**

4th grade students from around the state have been busy drawing and coloring their posters. Posters are due to the state office by Friday, May 12th. The county first place winning posters will be judged later in May and announced online with letters going to each of the winners. The WV Cultural Center in Charleston will again display all county first place winners sometime in September through November in the Grand Hall. Congratulations to all the winning posters and to all those 4th graders across the state who participated and drew what they think agriculture looks like in West Virginia.

## **Flora & Denver Turner Youth Speech Contest**

Remember to encourage those high school students to participate in this contest to earn money towards continuing their education after high school. The deadline to submit a county winner for the state competition is October 15, 2024.

## Photo Contest

Don't forget to snap those photos at farm bureau activities and around the farm. Any farm bureau member can submit one photo in each of the three categories (FB Activity, Funny & Whimsical, & Rural Scene). Submit the 5x7 photo matted on cardstock to the state office or bring to the annual meeting for the contest. The WLC awards the following prizes, 1st Place - \$25, 2nd Place - \$15, & 3rd Place - \$10. Let's show off our farms and activities!

## Share Your Favorite Recipes

I'm asking members to share their favorite recipes with all of us by submitting them to Ron Williams at the WVFB office for the magazine. I'm sure many of you have noticed he has been including recipes in the magazine. You can send them to him by mail or by email to: [ronw@wvfarm.org](mailto:ronw@wvfarm.org).

Until next month, may you all be safe, healthy, and spend as much time as you can enjoying God's beauty and rebirth.

Blessings from my kitchen to yours!



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# Growing Young

## Michelle Wilfong, Young Farmer and Rancher Chair



On April 20, twelve Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee members were able to get together, visit operations throughout Hampshire/Mineral counties and discuss upcoming activities. Stops included visiting Spring Valley Farm & Orchard, Brookedale Farm & Flying W Farms. We had a beautiful day traveling and learned so much!

The day began in Hampshire County, where we visited Spring Valley, owned by Eli & Misty Cook. Spanning over several hundred acres, the farm consists of an assortment of fruits and vegetables. They sell their produce at several different farmer's markets throughout the DC area and have 3 permanent store locations. Spring Valley has several employees, and they are always willing to try something new! We enjoyed seeing their numerous high tunnels, strawberries and much more!



*Inside Spring Valley Farm's newly built bakery.*



*One of the strawberry fields making up just a part of the 180 acres of fruit.*



*Inside Spring Valley Farm's high tunnel.*

The next stop landed us in Fort Asby, WV at Brookedale Farm. We were able to sit down and enjoy a lunch provided by owners, Donnie and Donna Alt. At one time the farm was predominantly a dairy farm, but in order to save it, Donna made the decision to diversify. The first step was adding a corn maze. The corn maze has grown for 20+ years and attracts a lot of visitors each year. You will also find several greenhouses on the farm filled with vegetables and beautiful flowers of every color. Looking for a venue for a wedding or event? Look no further! The Stadell at Brookedale is a beautiful wedding/event venue. They are open year-round for weddings, showers, birthday parties, and so much more.



*One of the greenhouses at Brookedale Farm*





*Our entire crew at Brookedale Farms*

We then traveled to Burlington to visit Flying W Farms. This is a sixth-generation family farm owned and operated by the Woodworth families. It now consists of a restaurant, farm market and slaughter facility. We were able to see a few of their feeding facilities and a very large bunker which is used to hold the majority of their feed. Are you looking for a nice place to sit down for a meal? Be sure to check out the restaurant! You can enjoy a wide assortment of burgers, grill items, sides and hand dipped ice cream!



*The restaurant at Flying W Farms*

We would like to thank each of these farms for taking time out of their busy schedule to speak to us and show us around. Each operation was truly different, and it was beneficial for us to see these different sectors within the agriculture industry.





## Miranda King

Farm kids and families are built differently. They have no fear, are up for anything, and will be dirty as soon as they step outside. Growing up I was a farm kid, now I am raising farm kids. My two boys Kennedy, 4 years old, & Lee, 5 months old are true farm boys. As soon as Kennedy wakes up, he is ready to go outside to check cows, ride the 4-wheeler, feed hay, and play with his toys & puppy. Lee, as young as he is, loves being outside. He loves riding the 4-wheeler, looking at the cows, and swinging. These boys are tough as nails. At 18 months old Kennedy gave mommy a mini heart attack when he fell right into the 4-wheeler tire and busted his head open. He never cried, and said he was fine. Even with blood running down his face, he wanted to go right back to playing.

On top of raising farm kids that means I am a farmer's wife. As a farmer's wife, we sometimes get overlooked and referred to as "so and so's wife". No one knows our names, but sometimes that's a good thing. Not only am I raising farm boys, but I am also raising a farmer. We farmer wives have a hard job, from taking care of the house, kids, and helping on the farm in whatever ways are needed. Some of us work off the farm on top of everything else. Our work is never done. The house is a mess, the kids are dirty, but everyone goes to bed with a full belly and a full heart. The kids won't remember the mess, but they will remember the memories and lessons learned growing up.









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YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS

# YF&R FARM SAFETY DAY

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Lunch Will be Provided

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## BIRTHDAY IN A BOX

***During Safety Day, as part of our YF&R Harvest for All project, we will be collecting birthday items and sending them to The Birthday Fair. The Birthday Fair is a nonprofit organization making sure children 1 to 14 yrs old can have a small birthday celebration.***

### **Birthday items needed to create a Birthday in a Box are the following:**

- 9x13 disposable cake pans WITH lids.
- Boxes of cake mix (any type, any brand)
- Frosting (any type, any brand)
- 12oz cans of Sprite
- Birthday candles
- Balloons
- Birthday cards (please do not write in them)
- Curling gift ribbon
- Gift tissue paper
- Gift bags (any size)
- Wrapping paper (no holiday themed wrapping paper, please)
- New unused toys, games, coloring books, books, accessories, and other items
- For children ages 1-14 (no clothing or shoes at this time, please)

Contact Miranda King for more information

Call/text 304-382-5065 • Email:kingmiranda924@gmail.com



# 2024 Farming Heritage Award

Farming families are being sought as applicants for the 2024 Farming Heritage Award that is being offered by the State Fair of West Virginia and West Virginia Farm Bureau.

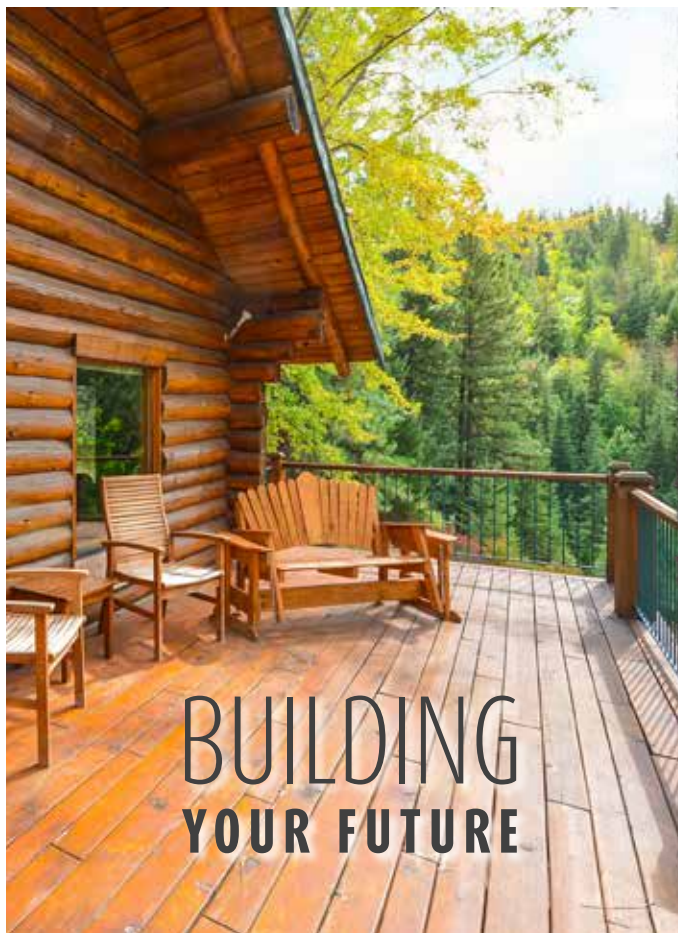
The Farming Heritage Award will be presented to a family that has strived to maintain its rural lifestyle by contributing to the community, acting as role models, dedicating time to efficient agricultural production, and maintaining the upkeep of their farm through generations.

The Farming Heritage Award honors an agricultural family and their multi-generation

contributions to their community and to West Virginia. The official state seal of West Virginia, featuring a farmer, is also the logo of the award program.

Entry forms may be completed by family members or by someone who wants to nominate a family for consideration. Judging will be conducted by an independent panel of judges.

All entries must be postmarked or emailed by Saturday, June 1, 2024. See application for full details. Entry forms are available by calling the WVFB office at 304-472-2080.



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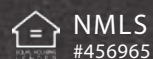
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# Grill Safety Checklist



Ahhh, nothing says summertime like the aroma of a backyard barbecue entangled in the breeze. People across West Virginia will undoubtedly enjoy many fire-cooked meals this season, but despite our familiarity with grilling, sometimes accidents do happen. Grill fires cause an annual average of \$37 million in property damage, according to the Insurance Information Institute (III).

**Grill masters:** Before grabbing those spatulas, brush up on these safety precautions from The FB Insurance Company – West Virginia to ensure simple summer cooking fun.

- Keep the grill away from anything that can burn, such as your home, garage, deck railings, and landscaping. Don't cook under the house's eaves or overhanging tree branches.
- Always cook on a level surface – and never move the grill after it is lit.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet from the grilling site.
- Never grill indoors or in enclosed areas. Charcoal grills produce carbon monoxide fumes, which can be fatal in unventilated areas.
- The cook should wear a heavy apron and oven mitts that reach high on the forearm. Use long-handled utensils designed for barbecuing. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, about 5,700 grill fires take place on residential property every year, most caused by malfunctioning gas grills. These fires cause

an annual average of \$37 million in property damage, 100 injuries, and 10 fatalities.

- Only use lighter fluid designed for grilling when charcoal grilling. Never use gasoline or other flammable liquids. Once the fire has started, do not add more lighter fluid.
- Never leave your grill unattended while lit.
- After the food is served and the grill is turned off and cooled, clean it by removing grease and fat buildup on the grates and trays below.
- Make sure the grill is cooled before storing or covering. When you're done cooking, remember that the grill will remain hot for a while. If using a charcoal grill, let the coals completely cool before disposing of them in a metal container.
- Cover your grill when cooled and not in use to help protect its parts from inclement weather, falling leaves, and insect activity.
- Store propane tanks outside, away from your house. Always check to make sure valves are firmly turned off.
- Last, but certainly not least, keep a fire extinguisher on hand. It could ensure that your fun summer day stays that way.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of U.S. adults own a grill or smoker, according to the Hearth, Patio, and Barbecue Association (HPBA). Let's all do our part to keep this favorite American pastime safe and fun for all!





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## Coverage when it counts.<sup>SM</sup>

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# God, Farming, and Sourdough Bread

## ....Stories from the Farm

**Susan Wilkins Taylor**



When my brother and I were kids, there were some older boys on the bus who teased us unmercifully about the smells emanating from our barnyard every morning when we were picked up for school. Now, granted, on a farm, there are always smells. And the farm we used to live on in Pendleton County was right along the main road; and the bus stopped only a few hundred yards away from the barn lot.

These particular boys weren't malicious types. But they were absolutely relentless in their teasing us about how bad it smelled. I told my dad about it and he told me exactly what to say to them. So the next time the teasing started, my small, timid, second grade self turned around and said "Smells like money to me." They were so stunned, they didn't say another word.

Of all the delightful smells on a farm – springtime rain, fresh mown hay, just plowed soil, corn silage, wood smoke in the fall – cattle manure definitely does not make the list. And yet, it increasingly does smell like money these days. As fertilizer prices continue to rise, cattle manure and poultry litter for fertilizing crop fields are more popular than ever with resourceful farmers.

According to data from the Economic Research Service, as of 2021, 322 farms in the US have now put in anaerobic digesters, basically manure-fueled power plants. The majority of these are found on large dairy farms in California, Wisconsin, and

Pennsylvania. I remember the first such operation I ever saw that did this, several years ago while on a farm tour. The farmer had laughed and said he "used to farm cows," but now he "farms manure." He had started using the manure created from his own cows. However, with the subsidies available from his country's government at the time, he found it more profitable to sell all his cows, truck in waste from other farms, and just concentrate on creating energy.

One thing I remember, even with the enormous tanks full of manure, there were no smells in the air. Only by opening a little smell hole on the top of one of the tanks did we get any whiff of what was in there. The digester had literally turned the manure into money.

If I had told the boys on the bus that someday there would be people who could turn smells like those from our farm into electricity to light and heat homes, they *really* would have teased me. These days, I *own* the smells of the farm, good and bad. I'm proud of this life we live and the cattle we raise. As activists and celebrities tell us to eat bugs instead of beef and that cow "toots" are destroying the planet; I look around at the beautiful spring green covering our fields and think, isn't God's circle of life just absolutely amazing? Even cattle manure has a purpose.

Something stinks, you say? Let me tell you about that.





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# The Importance of Old Fields and Early Successional Vegetation

*By Sheldon Owen, WVU Extension Wildlife Specialist*

About 79% of the West Virginia landscape is covered by forests, or late successional vegetation. This leaves a much smaller percentage of the landscape covered by early successional vegetation, or areas dominated by low-growing herbaceous plants. Most of this early successional vegetation is managed for pasture or hay and is dominated by cool-season grasses. While these are working lands with a livestock objective, there are many other fallow or even abandoned fields in our state that could be used as wildlife habitat. Taking these areas and specifically managing for old field habitat by promoting native herbaceous plants will provide nesting and foraging areas for grassland songbirds, brooding and nesting habitat for eastern wild turkey, flower-rich pollinator habitat, and even browse for white-tailed deer.

Landowners have spent many seasons fighting weeds in fields and pastures. Many of these weeds are beneficial to wildlife. Milkweeds, ragweed, pokeweed, asters, goldenrod, broomsedge and ironweed as well as many others provide high-quality forage and cover. These species occur naturally across the landscape, and by allowing them to grow and mature, landowners can encourage greater plant and wildlife diversity.

Mother Nature is trying to move our West Virginia landscapes from a field to a forest. Vegetative succession is the replacement of plant species and plant communities within a particular area over time. Imagine an old field that has been left fallow (unmanaged). Over time, different plant species

begin to appear and dominate the area. The field moves from primarily grasses to more broad-leaved vegetation. Then, brambles and woody shrubs begin to appear and, after many years here in West Virginia, a forest will develop. This is commonly referred to as old field succession.

This same succession may occur after some type of disturbance, either natural (wildfire, landslide) or human induced (land development for pipeline or powerline rights-of-way). The vegetation that comes in soon after a disturbance is referred to as early successional vegetation, or vegetation that colonizes a site early along this successional timeline. Early successional species are typically shade-intolerant herbaceous species. As time goes on, and in the absence of disturbance or management, the early successional herbaceous vegetation gives way to forests or late successional vegetation, which occurs later along this successional timeline.

This replacement of plant species is fairly predictable because the plants that are found on a particular site will depend on the soils, climate, type of disturbance and seed bank (seeds stored in the soil). In all cases, it takes disturbance to set back succession or maintain succession at its current stage. Looking across the West Virginia landscape, pastures, old fields, grasslands, wellpads and rights of way all consist of early successional vegetation. Depending on the type of disturbance, land managers may have influenced



*When managed, old fields with early successional vegetation provide valuable food and cover to a variety of wildlife species.*



succession by seeding areas with fast-germinating plant species to minimize soil erosion or have promoted grasses for livestock. However attractive a well-managed hay field looks to a farmer, a monoculture of grass is not attractive to the vast majority of wildlife. Our grassland songbirds, such as Eastern Meadowlark, Bobolink and Grasshopper Sparrow are the exception. Most wildlife need a diverse mix of herbaceous plants and a variety of structure with plants of different heights. The wilder a site looks, the better it typically is for wildlife.

Unfortunately, much of our early successional areas in West Virginia are dominated by non-native cool season grasses, such as tall fescue and orchard grass, which are not favored by wildlife. However, these areas can be properly managed to provide food and cover for wildlife. The first step is to get rid of the “carpet” of cool-season grasses. Tall fescue can form a thick mat over the soil, preventing seeds in the soil from germinating. This thick mat also limits many smaller wildlife species from moving freely through the field. Apart from a controlled burn, which is currently limited to state and federal lands here in West Virginia, killing these grasses

with the appropriate herbicide is the most effective way to remove this carpet. Problem grasses can still regrow following an herbicide treatment; therefore, it may take multiple treatments to reach the desired goal.

The plants that come back following an herbicide treatment will differ from site to site depending on the site conditions, soils, seed bank and vegetation surrounding the site. Be patient and give the seed bank one to two years to respond. Depending on the bank response, it may not be necessary to reseed or replant. Keep careful watch to ensure that what comes back is what you want. Non-native invasive plants are widespread across the state, and these plants do not support the same quality of habitat as our native plants.

Where rocks are not an issue and the carpet of cool-season grasses has been removed, disking is an effective method to set back succession and promote new growth. Light disking that incorporates 50% of the above-ground vegetation can stimulate the seed bank and new growth. Consider disking in strips or patches to create a mosaic or patchwork of disturbed ground that will maintain a mix of annual and perennial plants.



*Many early successional areas in West Virginia are dominated by non-native cool season grasses, which are not favored by wildlife.*



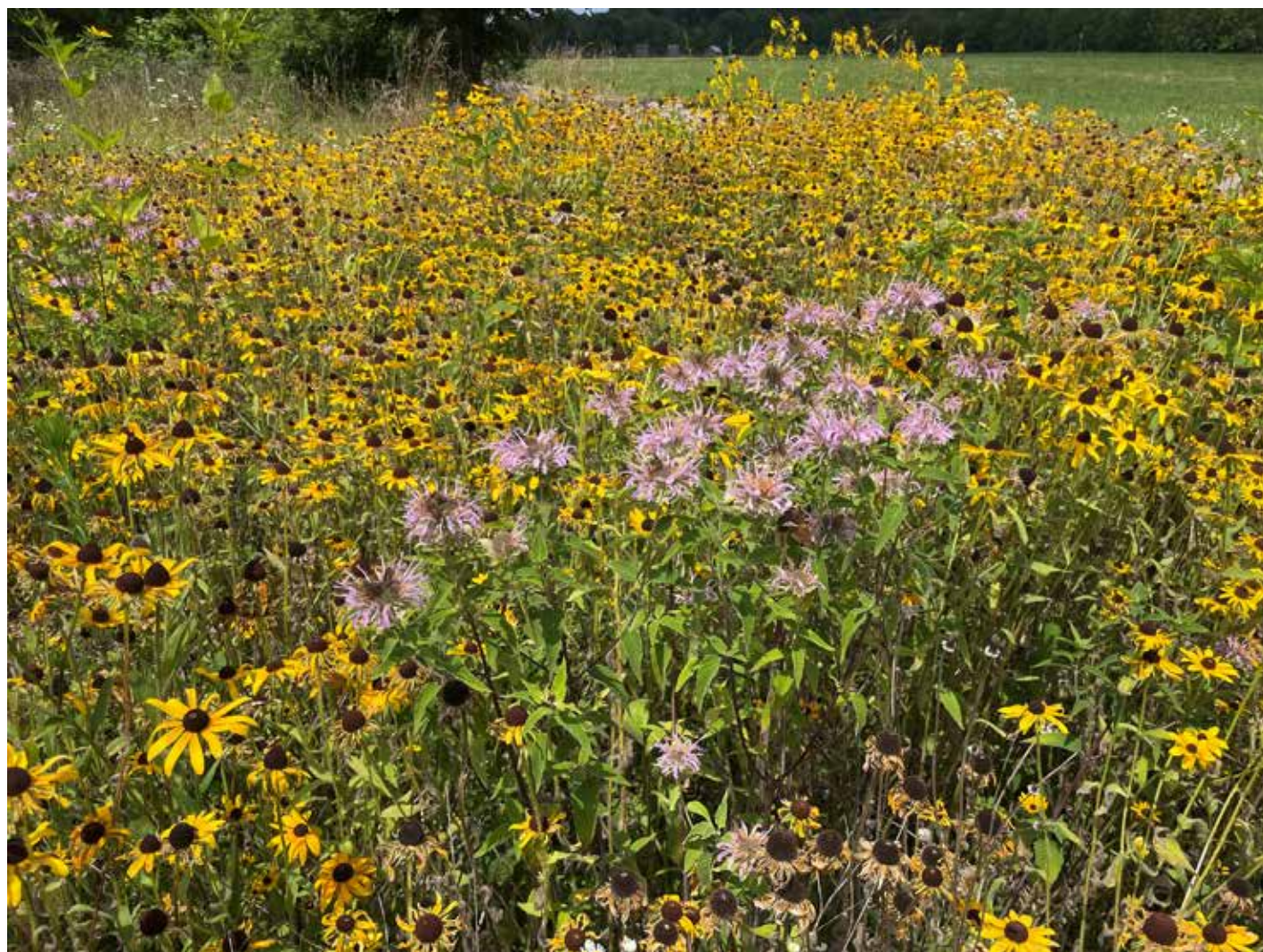
Strip disking just along the field edge next to cover is a good method to increase plant diversity of native grasses and forbs. The best time of year to disk is just before the spring green. The strips should follow the contour of the land and can be used to break up large fields. Spring strip disking will promote annual grasses while fall disking promotes forbs and legumes. Fall disking can be over-seeded with winter wheat and clovers to provide an additional food source during the winter months.

Rotational strip disking, where you only disk part of the entire field every three to four years, increases plant species diversity, stops the encroachment of woody vegetation and prevents vegetation from becoming too dense, while maintaining constant escape cover. If you are managing a single field, divide the field into the number of sections that correspond to the disturbance interval. For example, if a three-year interval is chosen, a 12-acre field could be divided into three 4-acre sections, each of which will be disked in successive years.

Herbicides are an effective tool in managing plant species composition, woody encroachment and controlling non-native invasive species. Broadcast

application of herbicide can be used to convert old fields from cool-season grasses to a more desirable grass and forb community. After conversion, spot treatments with herbicide may be necessary to control woody encroachment or remove undesirable non-native and invasive plants. Spot spraying has relatively low impact to the site, is easily controlled and does not remove all existing cover. Spot spraying can be conducted with a backpack sprayer, ATV or tractor attachment. Some herbicides may be restricted-use herbicides and require proper licensing to use. Check with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture to ensure regulations are met before application of herbicides.

Brush hogging or mowing is the most common practice used to clean up or manage old fields. Brush hogging does not set back succession to allow new plants to colonize a site. Brush hogging just maintains the current successional stage. Brush hogging also creates a heavy build-up of thatch, limiting the mobility of small mammals and birds. If brush hogging is the only option, then wait until late winter before spring green-up to mow. This will maintain vertical structure



*Native flowers like black-eyed Susans and minarda provide nesting and foraging areas for many native species of wildlife.*



throughout the winter months, providing valuable winter cover for many birds and mammals. If areas must be mowed during the summer months, consider strip or patch mowing that will leave areas uncut for cover and foraging. When possible, delay brush hogging until after July 15, which is a general time when most birds have finished nesting and fawns are able to escape. The pattern of mowing or brush hogging is also important for wildlife. If possible, start in the center of the field and mow towards the edges to provide an escape route for wildlife. Basically, don't mow in concentric circles toward the middle of a field.

Old fields with their early successional vegetation provide valuable food and cover to a variety of wildlife species. It takes some type of management to set back succession or manage succession in fields. Landowners are encouraged to learn to identify the plants and animals found in early successional areas to know what is there, what is beneficial and to better manage these sites. Consult with professionals from the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, West Virginia Division of Forestry, West Virginia Department of Agriculture and WVU Extension to follow the best management practices in old field or early successional vegetation management.



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## Focus on Winter Feeding Now... Reduce Worry Later

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

A well planned and successful summer harvest means less worries for the winter.

Why feed hay when you can graze? One of the most significant costs of a beef cattle operation is the cost to make hay and feed hay to livestock. A couple options to consider and plan for now are stockpiling of forages for extended grazing and hay distribution management.

### Stockpiling of Forages

Stockpiling is simply letting pastures grow and accumulate forage that will be grazed at a later date.

Advantages of stockpiling of forages:

- Reduction in the confinement of livestock in the winter months.
- Improved water quality and reduced soil erosion.
- Reduced cost of winter feeding of livestock.
- Reduced labor hay harvesting in the fall.
- Reduced diesel fuel consumption on the farm.
- Reduced labor for winter feeding of livestock.
- Increased and more uniform distribution of livestock manure over grassland areas.
- Increased forage quality than first cut hay.
- Increased livestock performance by utilizing higher quality forages.



*Fescue grass that has been stockpiled for winter feeding.*

### Hay Distribution

When feeding hay to livestock, producers should consider doing so based on a management plan to distribute hay frequently over a large pasture area rather than confining livestock to a concentrated area. Management techniques such as un-rolling of round bales, bale-grazing or frequent rotation of hay feeding areas are management techniques that could be adopted to improve winter feeding management. Bale grazing is a management practice of placing hay at strategic locations and using one strand of electric fence to move livestock to hay that has been previously distributed across a field.

Bale grazing eliminates the need for a tractor in the winter months. Bale grazing will distribute manure evenly across pasture areas. Any remaining hay not consumed by livestock will be added to the soil as seed and organic matter.

Advantages of Hay Distribution:

- Increased and more uniform distribution of livestock manure.
- Improved water quality by eliminating livestock confinement areas for winter feeding.





- Reduced soil erosion.
- Improved forage production on hay feeding areas.
- Decreased need to manage manure accumulated by livestock concentration.

Every farm is unique with opportunities to improve natural resources and address many areas of concern. Management of grassland resources on farm operations is an important factor for conserving natural resources. A prescribed grazing plan developed for your operation will be the basis for a grazing system that will enhance pasture condition and soil quality as well as optimize efficiency and economic return. A plan will outline proper livestock stocking rates as well as a planned rotation for grazing of forages.

Stockpiling of Forages and Hay Distribution projects may be funded locally through the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) program.

Interested applicants are asked to contact their local USDA NRCS Service Center for additional information or visit [www.wv.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wv.nrcs.usda.gov).

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# DANDELION WINE and SASSYFRAS TEA

— by Mike Snyder

Now that spring has semi-arrived here in the mountains, the daffodils, sarvis blossoms and forsythia are just about gone and the apple blossoms are full and starting to blow off, white petals in the wind. Our yards are alive with the beautiful gold of the dandelions. On the days I sit on the back porch with “No Particular Place to Go,” an old Chuck Berry song, stirring faintly in my head, I just sit still and let nature take over.

Maybe I can blame my spring fever on all the dandelions I see. Mow them down and they just keep on a’comin. They were brought here early on by European settlers. They ate them as greens, and used them for medicine, jelly and wine. The word *dandelion* translates from Latin-French as “teeth of the lion” in reference to the plant’s jagged, pointed leaves.

The dandelion wine in this story was from an old recipe, now lost, in a wildflower book our dear friend Ruth Zinn of Harrison County shared with my wife Jill. I forget how many cupfuls of the yellow flowers I had to pick, but it was a lot, and all the green parts of the petals had to be discarded. The flowers went into a stone crock along with water, sugar, raisins, currents, orange and lemon slices. Lastly, a thin tea towel was placed over the crock while it fermented.

Days went by and I wondered what was going on in the crock. After more days passed, I peeked inside, there was a crust on top of the brewing mixture. No problem, methinks, I’ll get a straw and sample it firsthand. Boy, it was delicious! It wasn’t wine yet, but it was such a delicious concoction that as the days passed, I would get out my straw, get down on my knees and sip. I could not believe how good it tasted! To make a long story short, my sipping kept right on until there was just a little left.

The recipe’s long gone and my lower back could not handle bending over and picking cupfuls of dandelion

flowers again. I do recall corking a bottle of it, even though I have no recollection of the taste of the actual wine itself.

Back then, I operated the Fastwater Flyfishing School in the spring and early summer. I was asked by a youthful lady to travel over to the Shenandoah Valley to conduct a fly fishing class for her and her friends. Women were always good learners in my classes. They paid close attention and followed instructions. Being a teacher and longtime fisherman, my classes covered the essentials of fly fishing and minimized all the diverse complexities of it. “Simplify, Simplify, Simplify,” was the quote from H.D. Thoreau that I put on my instructional hand-outs, along with the Fastwater motto, *Trout Beware*.

I only remember that the ladies had a great time wading in the Shenandoah River and I had a rewarding day in the process. I gave the hostess the corked bottle of dandelion wine as a thank you gift. She wanted to open it and serve it to her chums before I left. Not wanting to risk finding out that the finished product wasn’t pleasant, I told her to open it after I headed back home. So, I never did really get to taste our final effort and have never made it again. The taste of it brewing was treat enough for me.

## Sassyfras Tea

This writer knows it’s spelled sassafras, but we put the “y” in it when we say it in West Virginia.

It’s got to be an Indian word with some meaning, just as Kanawha, Monongahela, Shenandoah and Ohio have Indian origins. And Ohio named their state after our river because we own it up to the high water mark on the Ohio shoreline and have to pay for the bridges spanning it. Also like most of our readers, I pronounce it “Ohiah.”

The West Virginia side of the river was where my best early boyhood pal Butch Drake ended up when he left our neighborhood in Clarksburg. Butch was a Huckleberry Finn-type of kid. His sandy hair hung down on his forehead above one eye. He was also a little scruffy in a wholesome way. And he knew a whole bunch of stuff I didn't. Like knowing his way around Miller's cow pasture and beyond, all the way around Stealey Hill to Cobberfoot's cave. It was Butch who broke me into my lifelong call of the wild. Stealey Hill had old trenches on top of it and was covered in locust thickets and blackberry patches and was populated by foxes, rabbits and groundhogs.

That was also where the sassyfras trees grew. How Butch knew red sassyfras roots made such wonderful tea, I never asked him. But he showed me how to recognize its distinct mitten-shaped leaves, the stems of which you can chew and capture a taste of what the root bark yields to those who brew it into the wonderful tea that our white and Indian ancestors drank. Yes, I know scientists found out that safrole oil which comes from the roots can cause cancer in rats.

Well, I'm not a rat, even though I've been called one a few times in the past. And I've been drinking sassyfras tea off and on all my life, thanks to Butch and David Gregory, one of my students. David lived outside of Elkins in a pretty little valley where his dad did some

farming. David was a hard-working country kid. He pulled up an entire sassyfras tree with his tractor for me and brought me the roots. I scrubbed all the dirt off the biggest root and then peeled off the bark. That was over 20 years ago and the bark shavings have kept fresh tasting and powerful hanging in a open plastic grocery bag in our pantry.

I took a break from finishing this story and went downstairs, got out some of David's sassyfras bark chips and put them into our Mexican blue enamel kettle and it's now simmering on the stove. \*Note--white sassyfras does not make good tea. You want the red strain. I didn't know there was a white variety until I dug some and found out the difference. Honey goes well with this wonderful tea. Ours comes from the Patterson Creek Apiary and I like it cold as well.

I thought it was magic way back when Butch and I dug up a sassyfras with our mattocks and brewed up the first batch I ever tasted. By now, my sassyfras tea ought to be brewed up just about right, so I'll sign off from this story and leave you with these lines from an old Irish hymn, my favorite: *Be Thou My Vision*.

*"Be thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art;  
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light."*



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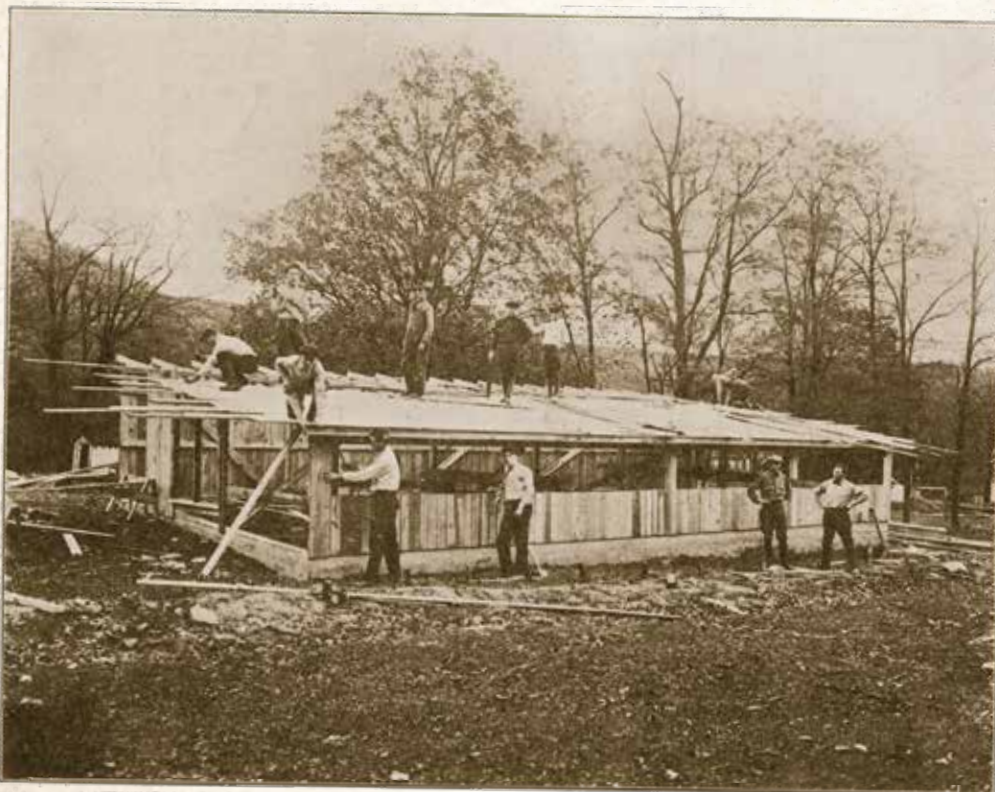


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WV Farm Bureau News, December, 1924



Group Building a Demonstration Poultry House of the West Virginia Type. Several Hundred of These West Virginia Poultry Houses Have Been Built by Farm Bureau Members and Others Throughout the State and Not Only Have Proved Satisfactory But Have Been So Located That Many Other Farm People Could See and Learn of Their Value.

WV Farm Bureau News, April, 1924

### THE PEOPLE WORTH WHILE

With the other fads of the moralists and other intolerant bigots comes the delusion that work is an affliction. This spirit has permeated all of us to a degree. One is sure to bring tears to the eyes of one's listeners when describing the poor workman who has to slave and sweat all day in the shop or in the field and then goes home at night and has nothing to eat but food and nothing to wear but clothes.

The truth of the matter is that the only happy people in the world are those that get up in the morning and go to work. The people who never work are mostly the seekers for trouble and the finders thereof. The reason all the people on the earth do not go mad and tear each other to pieces is that they have to work for a living. The only people in this world who amount to anything are those who work.

There are only a few people in this world who do not work. They are the parasites of the human race, the boils on the neck of the body politic. They are the lounge lizards and the parlor bolsheviks at one end of the garbage heap of life and the vagabonds at the other.

—CHIEF JUSTICE THOMPSON.

WV Farm Bureau News, March, 1924

### THE IDEAL FARM

In the final analysis the ideal farm—the truly successful farm—is the one which yields to the farmer and his family a living—full, adequate, complete—liberal in material rewards, but not lacking in social, aesthetic, and ethical values which make for character, contentment, and genuine happiness. The soil has the capacity to produce these returns if the hand which turns it but knows how to sow the seed. The key which will unlock the wealth of the fields and bring forth the treasures, material and spiritual, is the intelligence of the farmer.

—New Jersey College of Agriculture.

WV Farm Bureau News, November, 1924



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WV Farm Bureau News, February, 1924



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# Grandma's Recipe Box

H O M E C O O K I N ' A T I T ' S B E S T

*We seek to honor the heart and soul of Grandma's cooking and preserve the memories that make her recipes truly irreplaceable. May this mix of down-home farm recipes remind you of soul-warming Sundays at Grandma's house. Would you like to share your favorite recipe with the rest of West Virginia? Please email them to [ronw@wvfarm.org](mailto:ronw@wvfarm.org).*

## Sweet & Sour Meatloaf

1 can tomato Sauce (15 oz. size)  
½ cup Brown Sugar  
¼ cup Vinegar  
1 tbsp. Mustard  
3 lbs. Hamburger

2 eggs, beaten  
2 Small Onions minced  
½ cup breadcrumbs  
1 tsp. salt  
½ tsp pepper



Mix tomato sauce, brown sugar, vinegar & mustard in a small bowl. Place the remaining ingredients & 1 cup of sauce mixture in a large bowl, blend thoroughly by hands. Place meat mixture in a 2-qt. loaf pan (9x13). Pressing to form a loaf. Pour ½ cup of sauce over top. Cover with foil & bake at 375 degrees for 1 hr. Basting with ¼ cup of sauce after it bakes for 30 minutes. Remove from oven & cool 10 minutes. Drain excess fat off. Place on a platter, heat remaining sauce & pour over meatloaf.

— Miranda King, Roane County

## Biscuits and Sausage Gravy

¼ pound bulk pork sausage  
2 tablespoons butter  
2 to 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
¼ teaspoon salt  
⅛ teaspoon pepper  
1-¼ to 1-⅓ cups whole milk  
Warm biscuits



### Directions

In a small skillet, brown the sausage over medium heat until no longer pink, three to five minutes, break it into crumbles. Drain the sausage.  
Add butter and heat until melted. Add the flour, salt and pepper; cook and stir until blended. Gradually add the milk, stirring constantly. Bring to a boil; cook and stir until thickened, about 2 minutes. Serve with biscuits.

— Anonymous

A grandma is a little bit parent, a little bit teacher and a little bit best friend.

— Anonymous Author

Submitted by: Mrs. Pam K. Purdy, Putnam County



# COME SIT A SPELL



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

## Theme: Fictional Mothers

- ACROSS**

  - Bars
  - Escape or flee
  - Green gemstone or Heather Graham in "The Hangover"
  - Turning point
  - 34th U.S. Pres
  - Actress Sophia \_\_\_\_
  - Each and all
  - Lake, in France
  - Roof overhangs
  - \*Lovable mother of seven in "Harry Potter" Mrs. \_\_\_\_
  - \*Mother in "The Terminator," Sarah \_\_\_\_
  - Not safe, in baseball
  - "Hold on!"
  - Uno \_\_\_\_, in Mexico
  - Iranian monarch
  - Be a go-between
  - Kind of cuckoos
  - Passing mention
  - Dwelled
  - TV show "\_\_\_\_ 911!"
  - \*"Beloved" mother
  - Like a tennis skirt
  - Scottish kinship groups
  - Spare in car
  - Email folder
  - Vertical dimension
  - Turf alternative
  - Morse Code dash
  - Hippocratic \_\_\_\_
  - Three, to Caesar
  - \*Margaret White's telekinetic daughter
  - \*Elizabeth Zott of "\_\_\_\_ in Chemistry"
  - Vernacular
  - R&R hot spot
  - Capital of Vietnam
  - Yours is as good as mine?
  - Tennis retry
  - Cause anxiety (2 words)
  - Bookie's quote
  - Well-kept secret, for some
  - Teatime treat
- DOWN**

  - Do like volcano
  - Honey home
  - Iris holder
  - Human trunk
  - iPad "pen"
  - \*Matriarch, \_\_\_\_ Munster of "The Munsters"
  - \*Nadezhda of "The Americans," \_\_\_\_ Elizabeth Jennings, acr.
  - Muhammad's birthplace
  - Melissa Rivers' mom
  - Australian slang for afternoon
  - Widely hunted ruminant
  - Follow ems
  - A particular legume
  - Not pathos
  - Second O in EVOO
  - Kinda white
  - \*Mrs. \_\_\_\_, a.k.a. Marmee
  - Anoint
  - Red Sea peninsula
  - Drive a getaway car, e.g.
  - Goals
  - Like a Harvard building?
  - Plant-based laxative
  - \*\_\_\_\_ Bunker, mom to Gloria in "All in the Family"
  - Dance partner
  - Drive-\_\_\_\_, for short
  - Like a haunted house
  - Daisy dukes, e.g.
  - \_\_\_\_ chi
  - Casts a line
  - Popular electric car
  - Newton's first name
  - Foul substance
  - Matured
  - Bob of "The Joy of Painting" fame
  - Better than never?
  - On top of
  - "High" time
  - Cosine's counterpart
  - In the past
  - \*"Married... with Children" mom

### CROSSWORD

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# GoW CUD...

## MORE FOLKLORE:

A HORSE WITH BIG EARS HAS A GOOD DISPOSITION.  
WHEN A FOAL IS DROPPED, MEASURE THE DISTANCE FROM THE HOOF TO THE SHOULDER POINT. TWICE THIS DISTANCE WILL BE THE HEIGHT OF THE HORSE WHEN IT IS GROWN.

CUT A FISH WORM INTO 2 PIECES, AND EACH PIECE WILL MAKE A NEW WORM.  
IT IS BAD LUCK TO KILL A CRICKET.  
THE MAN OF THE HOUSE MUST SET OUT THE RAMBLER ROSE IF IT IS TO LIVE.  
IT IS BAD LUCK TO FIND A FIVE-LEAF CLOVER.  
WHEN YOU BUY A HORSE, IT IS GOOD LUCK TO CHANGE HIS NAME.

- FROM WITCHES, GHOSTS AND SIGNS, BY PATRICK W. GAINER, MORGANTOWN, WV, SENECA BOOKS, 1975.

REHAB	CAP	GUSH		
ATOLL	ACR	MAPLE		
CURIA	LEI	OUTER		
KINGDOM	SORROW			
	NEB	OMIT		
MOB	DEEP	LATHER		
UVEA	SAID	LHASA		
SONG	ERNIE	ANTI		
ILIAC	SIVA	TOOT		
CONRAD	OAST	IPA		
	NOUN	EEK		
DREAMS	PLAYERS			
CHIMP	USA	ROYAL		
ROGUE	RES	UTERI		
TWAS	PET	POSED		

April, 2024 Solution





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