



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development

1550 Earl Core Road, Suite 101 • Morgantown, WV 26505

Phone: 304.284.4860 OR 1.800.295.8228 • Fax: 304.284.4893 • TDD: 304.284.4836 • Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/wv>

---

**Gail Bennett, Public Affairs Specialist – (304) 284-4875**  
Contact: USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

## **Agriculture Deputy Secretary Merrigan to Host Media Conference Call to Discuss Value Added Producer Grant Program Changes Intended to Create New Economic Opportunities for Producers**

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22, 2011 – TOMORROW, Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan will host a media conference call to discuss changes to the Value Added Producer Grant Program intended to create additional economic and job opportunities to owners of small and medium-sized family farms.

***Wednesday, February 23, 2011***  
***11:30 a.m. EST***

**WHAT:** Agriculture Deputy Secretary Merrigan will hold a media conference call to discuss changes to the Value Added Producer Grant Program that will provide additional opportunities to beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

**WHEN:** 800-857-5233  
Passcode: USDA (Given Verbally)

Troubleshooting: 202-720-8560

All callers using the above pass code will be placed in listen only mode. To join the Q&A portion of the meeting, these callers are instructed to press \*1 on their touch tone phone.

Rural Development serves as the lead Federal entity for rural development needs and administers program assistance through its housing, business, community and infrastructure programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Further information on USDA Rural Development may be obtained by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>. In West Virginia, call 1-800-295-8228 to be put in touch with the appropriate personnel serving your county. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202.720.2600 (voice and TDD).

##

---

Committed to the future of rural communities.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."

To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).