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**Office** Commissioner of Agriculture

**Name** Bob Beach

**Party** Democrat

**County of Residence** Monongalia

### **Biography**

53 years Agricultural experience: Farm raised- 800 acre cattle farm, 4-H/FFA-Officer, Meat cutter-Manager, Perishable Meat Commodity Buyer, Multi-store Supervisor of perishable retail grocery (\$4 million annual budget), Political Science-Fairmont State University, Chairman of House Committee on Agriculture, Legislative Committee on Agriculture (19 years House and Senate), Southern Legislative Conference- Agricultural Committee member, WVU Davis College of Agriculture Visitation Committee. BeachforWV.com

#### **1. What do you see as the role of the Commissioner of Agriculture in spurring the economic growth of agriculture in West Virginia?**

The definition of Agriculture goes beyond farming to include economic development, jobs, and income. The role of the Commissioner is to manage the Department, but more importantly, foster economic and innovative growth within the greater agricultural community. I will work with and for the agricultural community to ensure timely communication including access to needed information and resources.

#### **2. Do you feel the environmental impact of agriculture has been properly addressed? If not, what changes would you favor?**

The Department should lead by example and I would encourage other agencies to follow. Recently a Court ruled in favor of the plaintiff, finding exposure to Glyphosate, a main ingredient found in Roundup to be the source of his current medical condition. As your Commissioner I will discontinue use of Glyphosate product on property owned and operated by the WVDA.

**Office** Commissioner of Agriculture

**Name** William "JR" Keplinger

**Party** Democrat

**County of Residence** Hardy

### **Biography**

Lifelong resident of Hardy County, supported by my loving wife, Stacy and children, Makenzie & William. My family plays bluegrass music together and know what it is like to earn a living from the land and appreciate the opportunity to be that third generation farmer to do so. A WVU graduate, 18 year County Commissioner and a business owner. Votekeplinger.com

#### **1. What do you see as the role of the Commissioner of Agriculture in spurring the economic growth of agriculture in West Virginia?**

Agriculture and forestry are vital to the economy of WV. As Commissioner, I will work to encourage growth of both agriculture and forestry in the state. New and innovative opportunities must be pursued in marketing these important industries. There are many opportunities in our country to expand our market share and improve our citizens lives and our family farms.

#### **2. Do you feel the environmental impact of agriculture has been properly addressed? If not, what changes would you favor?**

I believe that our agriculture and forest communities are working hard to preserve and protect our natural resources. We've taken great steps to protect our land and water resources. Buffers between fields and waterways prevent soil erosion and nutrient runoff, fencing streams and other management techniques are used to keep our waters clean, protect our soil, and improve our air.

**Office** Commissioner of Agriculture  
**Name** Kent A. Leonhardt  
**Party** Republican  
**County of Residence** Monongalia

### **Biography**

Kent Leonhardt is a long-time farmer, former State Senator and 20-year veteran of the United States Marine Corps. He owns a 380-acre farm in Monongalia County where he has spent time raising cattle, goats and sheep. As Commissioner, Kent has been able to combine his passion for cultivating West Virginia soil with his passion for serving citizens of West Virginia.

#### **1. What do you see as the role of the Commissioner of Agriculture in spurring the economic growth of agriculture in West Virginia?**

As the Commissioner of Agriculture, my goal is for the general public to understand the mission of the WVDA which is to foster a safe, reliable food system. This includes providing support to those producers who raise meat, poultry and dairy, as well as niche products. Our goal is to improve and modernize the current system in support of local

#### **2. Do you feel the environmental impact of agriculture has been properly addressed? If not, what changes would you favor?**

Under my leadership, we have added more acres to nutrient management planning helping the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. We recently signed a historic, first of its kind, cooperative agreement with the EPA to improve to work together on further programs and education. West Virginia agriculture is improving health for the environment through an entirely voluntary effort.

**Office** Commissioner of Agriculture  
**Name** Dave Miller  
**Party** Democrat  
**County of Residence** Preston

### **Biography**

MA in Administration from UVA

1974-1996 Teacher, principal and director of personnel in Preston County

1980-1996 House of Delegates; WV State Senate

1996-2000 Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture

2000-2007 Associate Dean to the WVU Davis College; WVU Legislative Liaison

2007- 2011 WVU Associate Provost for Extension and Public Service.

[www.dave4wvcommissioner.com](http://www.dave4wvcommissioner.com)

#### **1. What do you see as the role of the Commissioner of Agriculture in spurring the economic growth of agriculture in West Virginia?**

Having served as Deputy Commissioner under Mr. Douglass, I fully understand this vital role. I would do everything possible to support agriculture by removing onerous regulations and working with the Legislature to pass laws that will help agriculture grow and ensure we have safe food being produced. I've also been a farmer for over 30 years, so I understand!

#### **2. Do you feel the environmental impact of agriculture has been properly addressed? If not, what changes would you favor?**

Up to a point – yes. Most probably don't realize that most farmers are avid environmentalists. They conserve, use and re-use. They care. I would ensure the Department does everything possible to help farmers understand

regulations before becoming an enforcement agency and levying fines. As Commissioner, I would work with the Legislature to ensure laws make “sense” and protect our environment.

**Office** Commissioner of Agriculture

**Name** Roy Ramey

**Party** Republican

**County of Residence**

**No Reply**