



1 follows:

2 **ARTICLE 1. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.**

3 **§19-1-11. Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program and fund.**

4 (a) *Legislative findings.* --

5 West Virginians have a longstanding tradition of service in  
6 the armed forces of the United States. Many veterans suffer from  
7 physical and emotional afflictions and are often unable to find  
8 gainful employment upon returning from combat. Exploring  
9 opportunities to engage West Virginia's veterans in agriculture is  
10 beneficial to the health and welfare of veterans, as well as to the  
11 future of West Virginia's agricultural economy.

12 (b) *Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program.* --

13 The Department of Agriculture shall develop a Veterans and  
14 Warriors to Agriculture Program to integrate veterans into the  
15 field of agriculture, and support veterans currently working in  
16 agriculture. These programs may include, but are not limited to,  
17 using post-mine land for agricultural development, promoting high  
18 tunnel crops and production, expanding the apiary industry,  
19 developing cottage industries, exploring niche crops, raising more  
20 livestock, increasing the aquaculture industry and helping veterans  
21 promote their agricultural products through farmers markets and  
22 cooperatives. The department, Department of Veterans' Assistance  
23 and the state's Adjutant General shall work together to recruit and  
24 train eligible veterans, and develop and support the program.

1           (c) *Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Fund.* -- There is  
2 hereby created in the State Treasury a special revenue account,  
3 designated the Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Fund. The fund  
4 shall consist of income from leasing the department's property for  
5 the program, surplus funds which may be transferred from the fund  
6 created by section six-a, article twelve-a of this chapter, gifts,  
7 grants and donations, and legislative appropriations which may be  
8 made to support the program. Expenditures from the fund shall be  
9 used exclusively, in accordance with appropriations by the  
10 Legislature, to pay costs, fees and expenses necessary to  
11 administer the Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program:  
12 *Provided,* That for fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, expenditures  
13 are authorized from collections rather than pursuant to an  
14 appropriation by the Legislature.

15           (d) Notwithstanding any provision in this code to the  
16 contrary, should the Department of Agriculture deem it necessary to  
17 provide land for activities within this program, it is exempt from  
18 the purchasing requirements as they relate to the competitive  
19 leasing of state property.

20           (e) The commissioner may propose emergency or legislative  
21 rules for approval in accordance with the provisions of article  
22 three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code to effectuate the  
23 provisions of this section.

