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SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

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11 Arkansas Playgrounds Selected to Participate in Annual Shade Trees on Playgrounds Program

LITTLE ROCK, AR – The Arkansas Agriculture Department’s Forestry Commission (AFC) has selected 11 playgrounds at the following schools to participate in the Shade Trees on Playgrounds program (S.T.O.P.):

- Acorn Elementary School (Polk County)
- Ascent Children’s Health Services (Independence County)
- Bradley Elementary School (Lafayette County)
- Gandy Elementary School (Jefferson County)
- Harmony Grove Elementary School (Ouachita County)
- Lonoke Elementary School (Lonoke County)
- Parkview Elementary School (Crawford County)
- Springhill Elementary School (Faulkner County)
- St. John’s Catholic School (Garland County)
- Viola Elementary School (Fulton County)
- Weiner Elementary School (Poinsett County)

The Shade Trees on Playgrounds Program (S.T.O.P.) was organized to lower adult skin cancer risk by reducing childhood exposure to direct sunlight where children play, like school playgrounds. Winning schools receive five shade trees, mulch, watering supplies, and planting guidelines after participating in program training.

“The S.T.O.P. program combines hands-on, outdoor experiences with classroom curriculum about the importance of trees and the care they require,” says Urban Forestry Partnership Coordinator, Krista Quinn. “We hope this program not only improves the health of Arkansas students, but also leaves a lasting impression about the value of forests and how to be good stewards of our natural resources.”

Schools are invited to submit S.T.O.P. applications annually. To qualify, participating schools must lack shade, agree to use Arkansas Forestry Commission curriculum to emphasize the importance of trees and forestry in Arkansas, hold a tree planting ceremony with students, and agree to long-term maintenance of the planted shade trees. AFC personnel assist with the transport and planting of the trees.

The application period for the 2019 S.T.O.P. program will begin in April, 2019. Learn more about the S.T.O.P. program, [here](#). With program questions, contact Krista Quinn at 479-228-7929 or krista.quinn@agriculture.arkansas.gov.

The AAD is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Visit www.agriculture.arkansas.gov

