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SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

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2018 Local Conversations Event Schedule Released

Statewide, Ark. – The Arkansas Agriculture Department’s [Arkansas Grown](#) Program has announced five regional Local Conversations events scheduled for February through April, 2018. These events help create connections between local farmers and producers with the buying community, provide increased marketing opportunities for locally grown produce and products, and also highlight the health benefits of Arkansas specialty crops. Offerings will include networking, Farm to School training, and a vendor showcase. Online event registration is available, [here](#).

“Our regional Local Conversation events were well received in 2017 and we are pleased to expand them this year with additional training on the Farm to School program,” says Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward. These collaborative events are designed to bring producers and consumers together to learn from each other so that consumers can ultimately have more access to locally produced food and products. We hope attendees leave with new contacts, ideas, and options for buying and selling locally.”

2018 Local Conversations Dates and Locations

February 16	Texarkana: Holiday Inn
February 23	Monticello: Sadie Johnson Community Building
March 9	Conway: Carolyn Lewis Elementary School
March 23	Jonesboro: Carl R. Reng Student Union
April 13	Bentonville: Brightwater Center

Farm to School training will be hosted during the morning session of each event, which will target Arkansas school cafeteria representatives and meal coordinators, as well as producers, farmers, and others with an interest in Farm to School efforts. Each event is scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Events are free, but space is limited. Attendees can choose to attend single or multiple sessions at each event. Attendees should send an RSVP of attendance via links provided above, or by contacting Rachael Tucker at rachael.tucker@aad.ar.gov and 501- 683-4851.

The Arkansas Grown program promotes food and products grown in Arkansas by Arkansas producers, and helps make the connection between growers and buyers. Arkansas Grown is a program of the Arkansas Agriculture Department. Learn more at arkansasgrown.org.

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