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Arkansas Agriculture Department Announces Arkansas Grown Junior Program

Little Rock, AR – Today at the Arkansas State Fair, the Arkansas Agriculture Department announced the addition of a Junior membership to Arkansas Grown, AAD’s marketing and branding program that connects local food producers with consumers. The Arkansas Grown Junior membership program will be a partnership with Arkansas FFA and 4-H, and representatives from Arkansas FFA and 4-H joined Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward at the announcement.

The Arkansas Grown Junior membership will be available to FFA and 4-H members in Arkansas and will offer three separate program benefits: certification, an annual conference and a project based contest. The certification will ensure that students are knowledgeable in all facets of Arkansas agriculture and are prepared and capable of entering the Arkansas agriculture industry as a competent and well-rounded agriculturalist.

“Arkansas FFA and 4-H programs have been great partners for the Arkansas Agriculture Department and have done a great job in preparing the next generation to take over leadership roles in our industry,” said Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward. “Expanding our partnership to the Arkansas Grown Junior program is another example of providing our youth with training and tools for future success.”

The program will be in conjunction with other industry partners to better connect Arkansas youth with the agriculture industry.

“Arkansas 4-H is excited to partner with the Arkansas Agriculture Department’s Arkansas Grown program to offer our members yet another benefit beyond our current programming opportunities,” said Angie Freel, Interim Associate Department Head for Arkansas 4-H. “Everyone wins in this situation, and we think young entrepreneurs will have an opportunity to gain a customer base and learn from others by utilizing this system. Agriculture is an important component to the 4-H program, and this will only strengthen our educational efforts.”

Membership is county and chapter based, and advisors must receive training through the Arkansas Grown program before granted the ability to certify students. To learn more about training opportunities, contact Brooke Clanton at brooke.clanton@agriculture.arkansas.gov.

“In agricultural education, our contribution to the industry is human capital,” said Chris Bacchus, State Advisor for Arkansas FFA. “We’re excited about this project because the training our students will receive through Arkansas Grown Junior will assure they are career bound and job ready and better connected to the industry when they leave our program.”

Since 2012, the Arkansas Grown, Arkansas Made, and Homegrown by Heroes marketing programs provide branding and promotional benefits for members and offer a vital connection between Arkansas producers, makers and consumers. For more information about Arkansas Agriculture Department marketing programs, see arkansasgrown.org.

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The Arkansas Agriculture Department offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

