

ARKANSAS
AGRICULTURE
DEPARTMENT



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**Arkansas Grown Program to host Regional “Local Conversations” Events in 2017:
Bringing Together Local Farmers, Chefs, Grocers and Market Managers**

Statewide, Ark. – The Arkansas Grown Program announces four regional Local Conversations events scheduled for January-February of 2017. These events create connections for local farmers and producers with the buying community of grocery store managers, chefs, restaurateurs, and other consumers.

The AAD is proud to involve the Arkansas Hospitality Association at each event to help emphasize the relationship between agriculture and tourism, the state’s two leading industries. An agricultural/tourism panel, breakout groups, and samples of locally grown produce will be part of each program. The goal of Local Conversations is to provide networking opportunities for all guests, to spark ideas for making it simpler to provide locally grown food to consumers, and to provide updates on agricultural/tourism trends and tips for 2017.

Local Conversations Dates and Locations

January 31	Hempstead Hall, 2500 S. Main Street, Hope, AR 71802	9 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
February 9	Northeast Arkansas Foodbank, 3414 One Pl., Jonesboro, AR 72404	9 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
February 23	Sassafras Springs Vineyard, 6461 E. Guy Terry Rd., Springdale, AR 72764	9 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

“These collaborative events help us to bring together farmers, producers, consumers, retailers, and leaders to learn from each other so that consumers ultimately have more access to locally produced foods and products. We hope that attendees leave with new contacts, ideas, and options for buying and selling locally,” says Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward.

Events are free, but space is limited. Guests will be included on a first-come, first-serve basis. Attendees should send an RSVP of attendance for Local Conversations events in each region to Rachael Tucker at rachael.tucker@aad.ar.gov, or call 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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