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The Arkansas Department of Agriculture Hosts Local Conversations Event to Promote Local Procurement

McCRORY, AR – The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is hosting its first 2020 Local Conversations event on Thursday, March 5, to help connect Arkansas farmers and producers with the buying community. The free event will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the new Share Grounds certified kitchen at the Three County Fair Grounds in McCrory in collaboration with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Research and Extension (Extension).

“Our Local Conversations events have been well-received in the past, and we are pleased to partner with Extension this year to highlight the new Share Grounds program,” said Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward. “These collaborative events are designed to bring producers and consumers together to learn from each other so consumers can ultimately have more access to locally produced food and products.”

Local Conversations will feature a buyer’s panel including representatives from farmers markets, retail businesses, and school nutrition experts to provide insight and answer questions regarding local procurement. Training on the Farm to School program will follow the panel discussion, and an overview of the Share Grounds program will be provided

Share Grounds is a partnership between Extension, the USDA Local Food Promotion Program, and regional partners in Cleveland, Searcy, and Woodruff counties. The Share Grounds project offers an innovative approach to bring solutions to rural communities by utilizing existing facilities and infrastructure at county fair grounds.

Lunch will be provided by Farm Credit Associations of Arkansas. Seating is limited, so registration is required. For more information and to register, go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/local-conversations-tickets-94493515649?fbclid=IwAR1-4VB9Fd6GQsn9sE9oilez-h-lhfUatXZSsAadVAPGt1LvUeQKppPgmLo>.

The Department 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.

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

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