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## **Over \$1.4 Million Provided to Arkansas Fairs in 2017 to Support Agriculture**

LITTLE ROCK, AR – The Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission, provided \$1,433,397 in funding to Arkansas fairs in 2017. This funding includes \$641,397 in premium funds and \$792,000 in construction funds to county and district fairs, the Four States Fair, and the Arkansas State Fair. The statewide fair premium funds are paid annually to help cover costs of fair operations and general maintenance. Construction funding is paid to counties every other year to cover routine maintenance and/or improvements to fair facilities.

“Fairs provide communities an opportunity to showcase Arkansas’s agriculture industry and encourages the involvement of our future farmers and ranchers. The funding provided through these programs plays an important role in sustaining fairs at the county, district, and state level”, says Deputy Director of the Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission Patrick Fisk.

Fair premiums are awarded to fairs in all counties and districts that host an annual fair for a minimum of three days and that maintains a stable pattern of income and/or growth. Fair premium amounts are calculated on a points system based on criteria developed by the Arkansas Fair Association which includes the total number of fair attendees, admission prices, and total exhibitors. Applications for premium funds are accepted from January through May each year, with funds being awarded each fall based on points from the previous year’s fair. Construction funds are paid biennially and are divided equally among each county and district fair.

Livestock and Poultry Commission personnel routinely audit fair records to ensure that applications appropriately match completed premium paperwork. Each year inspectors provide 2,100 man hours at 80 fairs across the state to complete health inspections of exhibition animals and to ensure that the applicable animal health regulatory requirements are satisfied.

The Livestock and Poultry Commission is an agency of the Arkansas Agriculture Department. The Arkansas Agriculture 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. Learn more at [aad.arkansas.gov](http://aad.arkansas.gov).

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