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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 2/10/2023

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Arkansas Grown Grant Pilot Program Announces Second Round of Funding

LITTLE ROCK, AR – The Arkansas Department of Agriculture (Department) announces a second round of funding for the Arkansas Grown Grant pilot program for farmers residing and farming in Benton, Washington, Madison, and Carroll counties in Northwest Arkansas. This pilot program is created with support from the Walton Family Foundation and offers grant funding to eligible farmers who are committed to increasing capacity for wholesale fruit and vegetable production, resulting in more local food. The application can be found at cognitofirms.com/ArkansasAgriculture1/ArkansasGrownGrantForNorthwestArkansasFarmersRoundTwo.

Grants up to a maximum of \$15,000 will be awarded for eligible expenses to farmers in the four-county pilot program area. Free assistance in completing the application is offered through the Arkansas Small Business & Technology Development Center in Fayetteville. For more information, visit <https://asbtcd.org/fayetteville/>.

“The Walton Family Foundation’s generosity is well known throughout Arkansas and the nation,” said Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward. “The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is honored to assist in the administration of the second round of this grant program and looks forward to seeing the positive impacts it will have on farmers, consumers, and local food production in Northwest Arkansas.”

Funds will be awarded to approved applicants on an equitable basis until funds are no longer available. A committee will review applications based on the following criteria: (1) dedication to growing local food for sale to wholesale and commercial buyers; (2) demonstrated interest in increasing capacity to sell to wholesale buyers and distributors; (3) the ability to provide performance metrics on reports; (4) demonstrated need; and (5) sustainability.

In September 2022, the Department announced the recipients of the first round of funding. Grants were awarded for eligible expenses to 25 farming operations in the four-county pilot program area. For a list of recipients from the first round of funding, visit agriculture.arkansas.gov/wpcontent/uploads/2022/09/AR-Grown-Pilot-Grant-Winners.pdf. Photos from a reception held at the Center for Arkansas Farms and Food in Fayetteville for the 2022 recipients can be found at flic.kr/s/aHBqjA7ZRK.

For more information about the pilot program, go to arkansasgrown.org/grant-pilot-program/ or contact Karen Reynolds at karen.reynolds@agriculture.arkansas.gov.

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture, forestry, and natural resources conservation to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while sustaining natural resources and ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Visit

agriculture.arkansas.gov/. 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.