



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Greene County Commission gears up for third annual Ag Tour

The Greene County Commission, along with the Greene County MU Extension, city leadership, members of County departments and delegates from the community are gearing up for the third annual Greene County Ag Tour.

Made possible through a partnership with the MU Extension Center, this year's tour is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 25. The tour will depart from the Commission offices at the Cox North Tower at 8:30 a.m. and will return around 4:30 p.m. Due to limited seating, the tour is not open to the public, but members of the media are invited to attend or conduct interviews at the tour stops.

“Farming and agriculture-related activities remain a vital part of the Greene County economy. It is important that those of us in local government understand the unique challenges and opportunities area farmers face,” said Presiding Commissioner Bob Cirtin. “That what makes this tour such a valuable experience each year.”

The 2018 tour covers a wide range of ag-related topics, everything from egg production to a farm-to-counter business. Tour stops include:

- **Republic High School** where participants will tour the FFA greenhouse and fields and meet the students involved in this award winning program.
- **Dan Chiles farm** to learn more about how the family is reviving their farm after decades of renting it out. They are working with state, local and federal agencies to incorporate conservation practices.
- **Springfield Livestock Marketing Center**, a business that moves nearly 200,000 animals yearly through a state of the art sale ring, hosting buyers from a half-dozen states and pulling cattle from a 90-mile radius of Springfield with an economic impact of \$140 million annually. Eldon Cole, livestock specialist with MU Extension for 53-years, will share trends and concerns in the livestock industry.

- **Vital Farms**, an egg processing center with a core mission to bring ethically produced food to the table by coordinating a collection of family farms to operate with a well-defined set of organic agricultural practices that includes the humane treatment of farm animals as a central tenet.
- **Farm to Counter**, a store located Broadway and Atlantic where owners opened their first location to the public on 12/08/2017. They have a wide selection of local and organic snacks, beverages and produce.

“Several specialists with Greene County and MU Extension are involved in putting together this annual event and we thank the commission for entrusting us with that responsibility,” said David Burton, county engagement specialist in community economic development with MU Extension. “Every year I say it is the best line-up of tour stops we have ever had and honestly, I would say that again this year because of the diversity and uniqueness of these stops. It all points to the value and impact of agriculture in this county.”

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Greene County is the State of Missouri’s fourth most populous county, serving more than 275,000 people (2010 census). Its mission is to provide all citizens of Greene County, including those in its cities, a safe and thriving community through excellent customer service, unparalleled dedication, and the efficient use of taxpayer dollars. The Greene County Commission is the executive body of Greene County operating under guidelines established in the Revised Statutes of the State of Missouri. Within that authority the Commission enacts ordinances, resolutions and policies, supervises the activities of county departments, fixes salaries, adopts the annual budget, provides for construction and other services, and conducts hearings on planning and zoning matters.

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