



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Sept. 19, 2022**

## **Greene County Commission 7<sup>th</sup> annual Ag Tour**



*SPRINGFIELD, Mo.* – The Greene County Commission, alongside other elected officials and staff, toured five locations in the western part of the county on Friday, Sept. 16, that highlighted the importance of agriculture.

The 7<sup>th</sup> annual event is organized by the University of Missouri’s Extension and features local farms and businesses that play a vital role in Greene County’s economy.

## Dynamic Strides Therapy



Dynamic Strides Therapy (DST) located in Republic, MO, provides a variety of therapeutic services to children with special needs.

Primarily known for their work with horses, hippotherapy utilizes the natural gait and movement of a horse to provide motor and sensory input to children.

DST also provides occupational, physical, speech, and aquatic therapy to children and houses several sensory playrooms for children to develop and learn. DST works with an average of 200 children a week, aging from newborns to 21-year-olds.

“Children with autism struggle reading the emotions of humans, but can often sense the body language of horses and animals. Our therapy helps bridge that gap so children can better recognize what someone is feeling,” said Brandi O’Reilly, CEO of DST.





## Heritage Farm and Dairy



Heritage Farm and Dairy is owned and operated by the Hancock family in Bois D'Arc, MO. The fourth-generation dairy farmers milk over a dozen grass fed cows that provide the A2A2 protein, which helps reduce upset stomachs and inflammation.

In May of 2020, Matthew and Taryon Hancock opened up a shop that sells 150 gallons of raw milk a week, so fresh, it still has the cream on the top. They also sell farmed pork and poultry meat, plus a variety of other products at the shop, as well as to local farmers markets.





## The Modern Homestead



The Modern Homestead is a fall harvest company located on a family farm in Ash Grove, MO. Justin and Ronessa Williams sell a variety of fall themed home décor, pumpkins, and mums.



Established in 2020, the business has several activities for children and families including a corn maze, playhouses for toddlers, and petting zoo.

Additionally, The Modern Homestead hosts vendors from the local community to sell their products and helps grow the Ash Grove economy by bringing in outside sales to other nearby businesses.



## MO' Mushrooms



MO' Mushrooms is a small startup mushroom producer located in Ash Grove, MO. Owners grow and sell gourmet mushrooms and value-added products to sell to local farmers markets and restaurants.

The business opened in 2020 and grows lion's mane and oyster mushrooms, which are different from typical grocery store bought mushrooms like portobello or morel, and have a unique taste.

The mushrooms are grown over a 10-day cycle in a climate controlled, high humidity shipping container, in order to replicate their natural environment.

The complicated process is managed by a small group of employees that produce over 300 pounds of mushrooms a week that can be eaten or grinded into a seasoning for cooking.



## Baird farm rotational cattle grazing



Sam and Danni Baird transitioned to a rotational grazing system for their cattle in the late 1990's after attending an educational class by the MU Extension.

The 200-acre farm in Willard, MO is divided into several subsections with fencing. Water tanks and lines were installed so the cattle have access to drinking water outside of natural sources.

The 55 head of cattle are frequently moved from field to field to allow more time for grass to grow back, which reduces feed and fertilizing costs, and increases the total gross profit of the farm.



MU Extension research has shown rotational grazing is more efficient and cost effective for the farmer. Additionally, the federal government offers a cost share payback program to help farmers install the necessary equipment.



## Greene County agriculture profile

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, there are over 1800 farms totaling 223,000 acres in Greene County.

Farms across the county bring in over \$38 million to the local economy. Cattle make up the majority of sales followed by crops and hay.

Out of the 3,000 producers, 98% are family owned farms. Agriculture in Missouri is a \$93.7 billion industry.

“It’s great to see the rich tradition of agriculture in our community. Greene County was founded on farmers. Their hard work ethic lives on to provide for the needs of local consumers,” said Commissioner Rusty MacLachlan.

“It is always a pleasure to undertake our annual ag tour. It’s an educational opportunity for the Commission and a chance for us to highlight the major and still growing role that agriculture plays in Greene County. We salute those who work each day to meet the food security challenges of the future,” said Presiding Commissioner Bob Dixon.

“It is our honor to get to organize this annual agriculture tour. I am thankful that the Greene County Commission trusts the Greene County MU Extension office to organize and underwrite this tour. We are always excited to have a chance to highlight the innovative agriculture-focused work going on in this county. I’m already looking forward to next year!” said David Burton, community development specialist, University of Missouri Extension.

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*Greene County is the State of Missouri’s fourth most populous county, serving approximately 295,000 people. 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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