



**For Immediate Release
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LITTLE ROCK: Ninety-eight Arkansas public schools will receive a total of \$1,243,866 in the first round of grant awards through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) 2009 Equipment Assistance Competitive Grant for Child Nutrition Programs. These grant applications were selected from 179 school district and charter school submissions. To be eligible for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Recovery Equipment Grants, public schools had to participate in the National School Lunch Program for the 2008-09 school year.

The federal funds are for the purchase of new food preparation and service equipment for the federal child nutrition programs in public schools on an actual cost reimbursement basis. Competitive awards were made to applicants based on a point system. The grant requests stipulated which of the four USDA Focus Areas – Healthy Meals, Food Safety, Energy Efficiency and Expanded Participation – were addressed for each item of equipment requested.

Although one USDA criterion for award of the competitive equipment grants was at least fifty percent or more free- and reduced-eligible students by school kitchen or serving site, USDA did allow schools with fewer than fifty percent free- and reduced-priced students to apply for these equipment funds.

Attached is the list of winning applicants with the amount of funding and the equipment to be purchased.