

STATE OF ARKANSAS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME - GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: Agriculture is Arkansas' largest industry and contributes over \$20.9 billion to our state's economy each year;

WHEREAS: Arkansas blackberry production generates an estimated \$10 million annually and has experienced a 20 percent increase in new acres planted over the last three years;

WHEREAS: The University of Arkansas-Blackberry Breeding Program has developed and released 43 blackberry varieties, which are planted globally and have led to the rapid expansion in blackberries as a commercial crop worldwide over the last 25 years;

WHEREAS: Notable developments of the cultivars released from the program include thornless blackberries, fall producing blackberries (primocane fruiting), improved flavor, superior shipping quality, and improved yields;

WHEREAS: Blackberries grown in the Delta, Northwest, and Southeast regions of the state supply farmers markets, local grocery stores, U-Pick farms, and regional and national retail markets; and

WHEREAS: The blackberry industry is part of the diversification practice for many of Arkansas' full-time farmers and provides employment for many of our state's citizens and supplemental income for many rural families on a parttime basis.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, SARAH HUCKABEE SANDERS, Governor of the State of Arkansas, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim June 2024 as

"BLACKBERRY MONTH IN ARKANSAS"

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 30th day of May, in the year of our Lord 2024.



Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Governor



John Thurston, Secretary of State