

**STATE OF ARKANSAS**  
**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

**PROCLAMATION**

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME - GREETINGS:

**WHEREAS:** Arkansas is considered the birthplace of warm water aquaculture, beginning with the first commercial fish farms built in the 1940s for goldfish production, and is considered the birthplace of the commercial catfish industry with the first farm-raised catfish sales in the late 1950s;

**WHEREAS:** Aquaculture is an important sector of Arkansas' broad and diverse agricultural industry that contributes more than \$20.9 billion to Arkansas's economy annually as the state's top industry;

**WHEREAS:** Arkansas catfish farmers contributed \$20.6 million to Arkansas' agricultural economy in foodsize fish sales in 2023;

**WHEREAS:** Arkansas catfish producers had more than 8 million foodsize fish in inventory on January 1, 2024;

**WHEREAS:** Arkansas has 3,100 water surface acres used for catfish production in 2024;

**WHEREAS:** Arkansas enacted a catfish labeling law in 2015 to ensure consumers can accurately identify the country of origin of catfish purchased in Arkansas retail establishments.

**WHEREAS:** Arkansas ranks 3rd nationally in foodsize fish sold at 16,600,000 pounds; and

**WHEREAS:** Arkansas is home to excellent programs to provide research and support to the aquaculture industry, including the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Little Rock, the Aquaculture/Fisheries Center for Excellence at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, and the USDA Agriculture Research Service's Harry K. Dupree National Aquaculture Research Center in Stuttgart.

**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 August 2024 as

**"CATFISH 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 18th day of July, in the year of our Lord 2024.



*Sarah Sanders*

Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Governor

*John Thurston*

John Thurston, Secretary of State