



ASA HUTCHINSON
GOVERNOR

ARKANSAS AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION
ARKANSAS LIVESTOCK & POULTRY COMMISSION
ARKANSAS STATE PLANT BOARD

1 NATURAL RESOURCES DRIVE, LITTLE ROCK, AR 72205 | (501) 225-1598 | AAD.ARKANSAS.GOV



WES WARD
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

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Contact: Adriane Barnes, (501) 516-6255, adriane.barnes@arkansas.gov

Arkansas Agriculture Department Opens Organic Certification Cost Share Program

Little Rock, AR. – The Arkansas Agriculture Department (AAD) is now accepting applications from producers for reimbursement under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Certification Cost Share Program. Organic certification fees paid between the dates of October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018 are eligible. Applications for reimbursement are available, [here](#), and are due by November 1, 2018.

Reimbursement for 75% of certification costs up to \$750 is available for operators who have been certified by a USDA accredited certifying agent. Certification costs that have already been reimbursed through the USDA-Farm Service Agency or other agencies are not eligible. The AAD administers the USDA National Organic Program Organic Certification Cost Share through funding provided by USDA.

“Anything we can do to help offset costs for Arkansas producers is a win for agriculture, which is our state’s top industry,” says Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward. “We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the USDA on this program that provides important cost-share assistance to an expanding sector of Arkansas’s agricultural industry,” says Ward.

According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Arkansas was home to 64 organically certified farms totaling 4,871 acres in 2016, an increase of 1,500% from 2014. Of the \$39.8 million in reported certified organic sales in Arkansas in 2016, \$30.1 million (76%) was from the sale of livestock and poultry products, such as milk, eggs, and wool. The sale of livestock and poultry accounted for \$5.4 million (14%), and \$4.3 million (11%) was from the sale of crops.

For questions about the application or reimbursement process, contact Mary Elizabeth Lea at 501-225-1598 or maryelizabeth.lea@agriculture.arkansas.gov.

The AAD is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Visit www.agriculture.arkansas.gov.

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The Arkansas Agriculture Department offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

