



Asa Hutchinson  
Governor

# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Wes Ward  
Secretary of Agriculture

## Message to Arkansas Agriculture

March 24, 2020

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture has received many inquiries regarding COVID-19 response efforts as well as many requests for food and agriculture to be considered as essential critical infrastructure.

We are encouraged by the efforts of the President and the federal government in their response to COVID-19 and we appreciate the U.S. Department of Homeland Security including food and agriculture in their guidance on the essential critical infrastructure workforce.

Please know that Governor Hutchinson is in frequent communication with the President and Vice President regarding COVID-19 response efforts. As a former Under Secretary for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Governor Hutchinson has a deep appreciation for the guidance that they released on March 19<sup>th</sup> regarding the essential critical infrastructure workforce.

We are fortunate in Arkansas to have a Governor who grew up on a farm in Northwest Arkansas and has a deep personal affection for our state's agriculture industry that plays such an important role in providing the food, fiber, and shelter that we all depend on every day.

The Governor has been consistent in his message that we must do everything that we can to ensure that our state's economy, as well as our state's agriculture industry, be able to continue to operate to the full extent possible while also taking the necessary and appropriate actions to ensure that COVID-19 remains controlled and that residents and visitors in Arkansas remain safe.

Governor Hutchinson is holding daily COVID-19 updates for the media and I would encourage everyone to follow these events for the most recent announcements from the Governor and the Arkansas Department of Health. You can sign up for the Governor's emails and press notifications through this link on the Governor's website: [here](#).

Under Governor Hutchinson's leadership the Arkansas Department of Agriculture is working diligently to make the necessary adjustments to our operations in order to support the industry and provide our services to the maximum extent possible.

Please know that we are in frequent communication with our federal partners as well as state agricultural organizations and that we appreciate the efforts of our state's agriculture industry as we all work together to get through this difficult time. Please don't hesitate to let us know if the Arkansas Department of Agriculture can be of assistance in any way at all.

Respectfully,

Wesley W. Ward  
Secretary of Agriculture  
State of Arkansas