



**Asa Hutchinson**  
Governor  
**Stacy Hurst**  
Secretary

Date: April 22, 2021  
Subject: Proposed Dicamba Rule  
ANHC No.: S-ASPB-21-001

Arkansas State Plant Board  
Plant Industries Division  
P.O. Box 1069  
Little Rock, AR 72203

Dear Sir/Madam:

Staff members of the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission have reviewed the draft rule for dicamba use in Arkansas. The proposed changes remove the state-specific guidelines for use of the herbicide and defer to the federal label. Significant modifications include changing the cutoff date for application from May 25<sup>th</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> (for soybeans) and July 30<sup>th</sup> (for cotton), removing the prohibition from using tank mixes containing glyphosate with dicamba, and removal of record keeping requirements. Buffer distances of one-mile or ½ -mile have also been eliminated, deferring to the EPA's 240-foot to 310-foot buffer.

The Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission is an agency within the Division of Arkansas Heritage charged with identifying and protecting the State's unique natural diversity. To accomplish this, the agency has a land acquisition program and currently holds legal interest in 76 Natural Areas (over 70,500 acres) throughout the state. The agency also works to protect known locations of species of conservation concern through its inventory and environmental review programs. Because of the volatile nature of dicamba, we are concerned about the possible adverse impacts to species of conservation concern, high quality natural communities, state-owned Natural Areas, pollinators, and native vegetation. Studies indicate dicamba is most volatile at temperatures above 80° F. In Arkansas the average daily high temperatures can begin reaching 80° F in May and average temperatures can be well above 80° F by June and July. Applying an Arkansas-specific time frame to dicamba application, avoiding mixing dicamba with glyphosate (which has been shown to increase its volatility), keeping good records on application, and maintaining protective buffer distances is a practical way to mitigate unintended impacts of the herbicide while still allowing its use. Whereas, we would like to see a more cautious approach, we encourage the State Plant Board, at least, to maintain existing protections, and to take a pro-active, science-based approach to regulating dicamba use in the state for the protection of all of the state's resources.

The opportunity to comment is appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy Osborne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cindy Osborne  
Data Manager/Environmental Review Coordinator