

# STATE OF ARKANSAS

## EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

### PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME - GREETINGS:

**WHEREAS:** Agriculture is Arkansas' largest industry and contributes over \$19 billion to our state's economy each year;

**WHEREAS:** Arkansas has experienced a 50 percent increase in new acres planted with blackberries over the last three years bringing our total producing land to over 300 acres;

**WHEREAS:** The economic value of the Arkansas blackberry industry generates an estimated \$10 million annually;

**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 University of Arkansas Blackberry Breeding Program include thornless blackberries, fall producing blackberries (primocane fruiting), improved flavor, superior shipping quality, and improved yields;

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

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

**WHEREAS:** Blackberries are a healthy food high in antioxidants that are enjoyed by Arkansans statewide, and their consumption enhances public health and well-being.

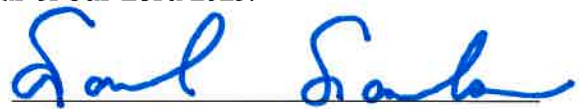
**NOW, THEREFORE, I, SARAH HUCKABEE SANDERS, Governor of the State Arkansas, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim June, 2023, as**

#### **"BLACKBERRY MONTH IN ARKANSAS"**

and urge the citizens of the state to take cognizance of this event and participate fittingly in its observance.

**IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 7th day of June, in the year of our Lord 2023.**



  
Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Governor

  
John Thurston, Secretary of State