

STATE OF ARKANSAS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: Arkansas consistently ranks in the top three states in the nation in the production of foodsize, farm-raised catfish; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas catfish farmers contributed \$18.1 million to Arkansas's agricultural economy in foodsize fish sales last year, an increase of 7% from 2016; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas catfish producers had 10.3 million foodsize fish in inventory on January 1, 2018, an increase of 61% from 2017; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas has 4,800 water surface acres used for catfish production in 2018; and

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; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas is home to excellent programs to provide research and support to the aquaculture industry, including 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; and

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; and

WHEREAS: Aquaculture is an important sector of Arkansas's broad and diverse agricultural industry that contributes more \$21 billion to Arkansas's economy annually as the state's top industry;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ASA HUTCHINSON, 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 2018, as

ARKANSAS CATFISH MONTH

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 20th day of July, in the year of our Lord 2018.



Asa Hutchinson

Asa Hutchinson, Governor

Attest.

Mark Martin

Mark Martin, Secretary Of State