

**STATE OF ARKANSAS**  
**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

**PROCLAMATION**

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

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

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

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

WHEREAS: The University of Arkansas Blackberry breeding program has developed and released 21 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; and

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 of fruit, and improved yields; and

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

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 healthful food high in antioxidants. Their consumption enhances public health and well-being and are enjoyed by Arkansans statewide;

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 June 2022, as

**ARKANSAS BLACKBERRY MONTH**

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of May, in the year of our Lord 2022.



  
Asa Hutchinson, Governor

  
John Thurston, Secretary of State