

STATE OF ARKANSAS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: Aquaculture is an important sector of Arkansas's broad and diverse agricultural industry that contributes more than \$19 billion to Arkansas's economy annually as the state's top industry; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas catfish farmers contributed \$19.5 million to Arkansas's agricultural economy in foodsize fish sales last year, up 17 percent from 2020; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas catfish producers had more than 9.6 million foodsize fish in inventory on January 1, 2022; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas has 3,800 water surface acres used for catfish production in 2022, a six percent increase over 2021; 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;

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 2022, 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 27th day of June, in the year of our Lord 2022.



Asa Hutchinson

Asa Hutchinson, Governor

Attest:

John Thurston
John Thurston, Secretary of State