



Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 11/21/2024

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Governor Sanders Pardons Grand Champion Turkey Ahead of Thanksgiving Holiday

LITTLE ROCK, AR — Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders pardoned two turkeys, “Tom” and “Gladys,” today at an event celebrating the state’s turkey industry. The turkeys were raised by nine-year-old Nevaeh Haile of Vilonia. Haile is a member of the Mount Vernon Enola 4-H Club and “Tom” recently won grand champion at the Arkansas State Fair.

During the event, Governor Sanders also [proclaimed](#) November 24-30 as Arkansas Turkey Week. Governor Sanders thanked Cargill for their donation of 150,000 pounds of turkey products to the Arkansas Foodbank, Northwest Arkansas Foodbank, and River Valley Foodbank during the holiday season.

“This is the time of year to give thanks to everyone around us but especially our farmers. Our turkey producers have been bringing families together for years and we are so grateful for their work to feed Arkansans and Americans this holiday season,” said Governor Sanders.

“Thanksgiving is the perfect time to celebrate agriculture and the importance of turkey production to our state’s largest industry,” said Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward. “We’re thankful for the industry that provides the food, fiber, fuel, and shelter that we depend on every single day and we’re thankful to be joined today by Nevaeh and other 4-H and FFA members that represent the future of our state and our agriculture industry.”

The poultry industry is the leading sector of Arkansas agriculture with cash receipts totaling \$6.7 billion or roughly 50 percent of all agricultural cash receipts. Of that, turkey production contributes approximately \$510 million to the state’s economy. Arkansas is home to approximately 497 farms that produce turkeys and provide over 542 million pounds of protein annually.

“As the third-largest turkey producer in the country, Arkansas plays a major role in ensuring that tables across the United States are filled with quality poultry products,” said Marvin Childers, President of The Poultry Federation. “Arkansas produces 27 million turkeys a year and Arkansas Turkey Week is an opportunity for us to celebrate the hardworking farmers who dedicate themselves to producing turkeys of the highest standards. We are also fortunate to have two of the largest processing companies, Cargill and Butterball, who employ thousands of hardworking Arkansans in Springdale, Ozark, Huntsville, and Jonesboro.”

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture, forestry, and natural resources conservation to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while sustaining natural resources and ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. The Arkansas Department of Agriculture offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer. For more information, visit agriculture.arkansas.gov/.