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Governor Hutchinson Meets with Agriculture Industry Leaders: Hog Farm Permit Centered Discussion

LITTLE ROCK, AR – Governor Hutchinson and Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward met with state agricultural leaders today at the Capitol to discuss the Regulation 5 permitting process. The Governor met individually with leadership from the Arkansas Pork Producers Association to address their concerns about the C&H Hog Farm Regulation 5 permitting decision followed by a period of discussion with agricultural leaders from our state’s diverse agricultural interests to include the dairy industry, Arkansas Pork Producers Association, Arkansas Cattlemen’s Association, the Poultry Federation, Arkansas Forestry Association, Agricultural Council of Arkansas, Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts, Arkansas Rice Federation, and the Arkansas Soybean Association.

The primary objective of this meeting was to keep the state’s agriculture industry, through respective association leadership, informed about current agricultural issues. Issues discussed at the meeting included Regulation 5 permits and the recent permitting decision by the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) in regards to C&H Hog Farm. The Governor has been assured by ADEQ that the permit denial was based on insufficient data in the permit application, which is outlined at the ADEQ website, [here](#).

Arkansas currently has 221 active Regulation 5 permits, granted by ADEQ, and all are for agricultural operations. 156 of these permits are for swine operations. During the meeting Governor Hutchinson assured the group that this decision does not indicate a policy change by the administration and it does not hold implications for other Arkansas agricultural operations. The Governor praised the decision by the Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission (APC&E) to grant a stay that allows the farm to continue operating throughout the appeal process. The Governor also reaffirmed his position that he fully supports the farm operators being able to supplement the record in order to provide any missing or incomplete information as the decision goes through the appeal process.

Agriculture is Arkansas’s largest industry providing over \$20 billion in economic impact to the state each year. Governor Hutchinson recognizes the importance of this industry and continues to be a strong and vocal supporter of agriculture at the state, national, and international level. Governor Hutchinson’s leadership in agriculture includes facilitating two visits from the United States Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue to Arkansas in less than one year to see and hear first-hand the agricultural issues of our state, meeting with Vice President of the United States Mike Pence to advocate for the importance of our agricultural trading relationship with Mexico and Canada in NAFTA negotiations, and participating in numerous international trade missions to help open additional markets for our state’s agricultural producers. “This meeting demonstrates the Governor’s consistent and continued commitment to Arkansas agriculture and represents our commitment to work very hard to keep the industry informed with fact-based information regarding current issues,” said Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward.

The Arkansas Agriculture Department is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Learn more: www.aad.arkansas.gov.

