Foreign Land Ownership in Arkansas

During the 2022 Policy Development season, a hot topic from many county Farm Bureau meetings was “should we restrict foreign land ownership in Arkansas?” This information is intended to provide a look into the current state of foreign land ownership in The Natural State. The majority of information provided here is from the 2020 Foreign Holdings of U.S. Agricultural Land report published by the USDA Farm Service Agency.

Breakdown of land in Arkansas
What type of land do foreign entities own?

Where do we rank among the rest of the U.S.?
Arkansas is tied for 11th place (with Oklahoma) in percentage of privately held agriculture land owned by foreign entities.

Percentage of Private Ag Land Under Foreign Ownership

- Arkansas (#11): 4%
- Oregon (#10): 4.6%
- Colorado (#9): 4.8%
- Nevada (#8): 5.2%
- Michigan (#7): 5.7%
- Louisiana (#6): 5.8%
- Florida (#5): 5.8%
- Alabama (#4): 6.2%
- Washington (#3): 7.1%
- Hawaii (#2): 9.2%
- Maine (#1): 19.5%
Conclusion

It is apparent that foreign ownership of agricultural land is on the rise in The Natural State, with the leading land type being forestland followed by cropland then pastureland. Compared to surrounding states, Arkansas falls in the middle for percentage of foreign owned private ag land. According to the USDA, nationally, the leading land type owned by foreign entities is also forestland. Until 2019, pastureland was the 2nd most owned land type. That year, approximately 2.5 million acres of cropland were purchased by foreign entities. More information on this data is available through the USDA website under “Foreign Holdings of U.S. Agricultural Land.”

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