The 94th General Assembly concluded its regular session on May 1, 2023, with a final tally of 1,658 bills filed, 890 of which will become law.

I’m proud to share that our team worked diligently to advocate on behalf of Arkansas Farm Bureau (ArFB) members and their legislative priorities during the 89-day session. These efforts resulted in several major achievements, which will undoubtedly have a significant and lasting impact on the farmers and ranchers in Arkansas.

Some of our team’s achievements include improved access to affordable healthcare, a robust agriculture education curriculum for elementary students in the state, continuation of animal medicine sales at farm stores and farm cooperatives, fencing law reform and streamlining the H-2A driver’s license process.

During the session, we were glad to host the return of Farmer’s Day at the Capitol, an event that had been absent since 2019. On March 1st, more than 300 ArFB members and advocates joined us in Little Rock to take part in the legislative process and share a meal with legislators to say thanks for their work on our industry’s behalf. Thank you for making that event a priority in your counties this year.

During the session, ArFB members actively engaged with legislators by directly advocating for various bills, resulting in over 1,450 contacts. This level of participation from our members was crucial to our success, and we greatly appreciate you taking the time to make your voices heard, ensuring that our industry’s interests were represented in the legislative process.

Arkansas Farm Bureau’s advocacy efforts serve as an example of how citizen engagement can make a significant impact in shaping public policy. We thank you for your continued support and look forward to continuing our work to support the agriculture community in Arkansas.

Our members are grateful to the elected officials who serve Arkansas and acknowledge the various sacrifices required to offer themselves up for public service.

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2023 ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

To sign up for ArFB updates, T.E.X. ARFB to 52886
**LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES:**

**Affordable Health Benefit Programs for our Members and Arkansans**
- SB 324 / Act 626: Sen. R. Hill (R-Cabot) & Rep. J. Boneham (R-Greenwood) — Allows in-office origination of Advanced Residency Certification Program (ARCP) permits to allow providers to offer residency programs to family physicians and other specialists.

**Expands Supplemental Agricultural Elementary Education**
- HB 1182 / Act 161
- SB 476 / Act 706
- SB 191 / Act 135
- HB 1336 / Act 243

**Veterinary Medical Examining Board to issue additional certifications for a veterinary**

**driver's test after receiving an instruction/learner's permit, which will speed up the**

**process**

**the requirement that original driver's license applicants must wait at least 30 days to take a**

**driver's test**

**the law regarding livestock running at large, impounding stray animals and repeals the law**

**provisions that currently require members to be appointed from lists of candidates**

**will change how board members are appointed to the State Plant Board by repealing**

**the law is being amended to change the burden of proof regarding agricultural operations.**

**Right to Farm**
- HB 1477 / Act 507: Rep. D. Vaughn & Sen. R. Hill (R-Cabot) — Consolidates and abolishes certain boards within the Department of Agriculture and transfers the administrative function of agricultural promotion boards to the Department of Agriculture.

**Boards & Commissions**
- SB 299 / Act 712: Sen. D. Russell (R-Benton) & Rep. R. Montover (R-Mountain Home) — Transfers the administrative function of agricultural promotion boards from Arkansas Farm Bureau and its members to an appointed administrator appointed by the Department of Agriculture.

**Veterinarians**
- SB 1162 / Act 591: Rep. C. Fryer (R-Greenwood) & Sen. R. Ritter (R-Hot Springs) — Exempts the sale of veterinary drugs and medicines from certain excise tax requirements. This change permits wholesalers, distributors, pharmacies, and farm stores to develop or ship animal drugs without excise tax liability.

**Renewable Energy Policies and Programs**
- SB 407 / Act 650: Sen. M. McGehee (R-Rothschild) & Rep. B. Reeves (R-Cross) — Requires generating energy from certain sources to be deemed carbon neutral and energy produced from certain sources in conjunction with carbon capture technologies to be considered carbon neutral.

**TAX**
- SB 949 / Act 315: Sen. J. Clingman (R-Paragould) & Rep. E. Vines (R-Sheridan) — Expands the tax credit to include certain certified conservation practices. This legislation would increase the tax credit equivalent to the value of certified conservation practices. This legislation would increase the tax credit equivalent to the value of certified conservation practices.

**Other Agricultural Legislation:**
- SB 449 / Act 612: Rep. D. Vaughn (R-Crossett) & Sen. J. Johnson (R-Jonesboro) — Lobbying legislation that was proposed, but not passed.

**Inside**

- HB 1706 / Act 645: Rep. D. Vaughn (R-Crossett) & Sen. J. Johnson (R-Jonesboro) — Amends the Arkansas State Lottery Act to authorize the sale of lottery tickets to eligible persons who may have created a non-refundable income tax credit for beginning farmers and owners of agricultural assets who sell or rent to beginning farmers.

- HB 1564 / Act 685: Sen. D. Eaves (R-Searcy) — Amends the Arkansas State Lottery Act to authorize the sale of lottery tickets to eligible persons who may have created a non-refundable income tax credit for beginning farmers and owners of agricultural assets who sell or rent to beginning farmers.

- HB 1707 / Act 664: Rep. D. Vaughn (R-Crossett) & Sen. J. Johnson (R-Jonesboro) — Creates a new program to provide funding to new agricultural ventures and business initiatives.

- SB 1708 / Act 689: Sen. J. Payton (R-little Rock) — outlines requirements for transition planning and distribution to projects in rural areas.

**SB 518 / Act 713: Sen. J. Payton (R-little Rock) — amends the Arkansas Tax Code to provide for tax credits and exemptions to encourage, support, and promote agricultural education, to reduce the tax burden on agricultural businesses and to provide for the efficient management of agricultural activities.**

*You can find the context of all bills and acts at www.arkleg.state.ar.us.*