

JOHN BOOZMAN

United States Senator *for* ARKANSAS

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Boozman Bulletin: Arkansas is Ag

Agriculture is an economic driver for Arkansas. It accounts for nearly one-quarter of our state's economic activity, making it Arkansas's largest industry. This is one of the reasons I serve on the Senate Agriculture Committee and why I annually travel across the state talking with farmers, ranchers and producers. We all have a responsibility to protect and promote this industry and the communities it supports.

This year it was particularly important as we are in the process of passing the 2018 Farm Bill. Having input from those in the industry is vital to finalizing legislation that meets the needs of our agriculture community. Earlier this month, I was selected to serve on the [Farm Bill conference committee](#). Senate and House members on the committee will reconcile the differences in the Farm Bill legislation passed by the two chambers.

I enjoyed spending time and visiting with the hardworking Arkansans who support our agriculture industry and feed and clothe the world. Here are some of the highlights.

Students and staff at the Don Tyson Center for Agricultural Sciences at the [University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture - Extension \(UAEX\)](#) are doing important ag-related research that informs the industry and helps increase productivity and efficiency.





The Morgan family has operated its Johnson County peach farm since 1876. [Peach Pickin' Paradise](#) has become a popular destination for Arkansans to pick peaches. We visited to support family farms and a popular destination for peach lovers.



The DeSalvo family operates Big D Ranch in Center Ridge. The cattle ranch specializes in the development of registered Ultrablack Bulls and Heifers. Our cattle ranchers put out a safe and affordable product that can compete with anybody in the world. I appreciated hearing from members of the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association about their thoughts and questions on issues that impact their industry like the farm bill, fair trade and regulatory reform.



Commodity Futures Trading Commission Chairman Chris Giancarlo joined our tour for one day. Since much of the work the [CFTC](#) does involves the agriculture industry, providing him with an opportunity to see Arkansas's industry and interact with farmers and producers will help him and the entire commission be better informed about regulations and decisions involving agriculture.





[Barnhill Orchards](#) in Lonoke is a veteran-owned fruit and vegetable farm that has been in operation since 1980. The orchard is a family business.



This antique tractor on the Davis Farm in Stuttgart is a reminder of how long Arkansans have been farming the land.





Students and staff at the University of Arkansas at Monticello School of Forestry and Natural Resources are conducting research to counter invasive species and enhance land management practices through the use of new technology. I got a firsthand look at what they're working on. Their research will improve forestry practices in our state and beyond.



See what other Arkansans we visited during the 2018 Ag Tour using #ARisAg on Twitter or by visiting my [Facebook page](#).

Quick Takes:

- **Advocating for Expanded Benefits for Blue Water Navy Veterans:** The Senate Veterans Affairs (VA) Committee recently examined legislation to expand the benefit eligibility for veterans who were [exposed to the chemical Agent Orange](#) during their military service in Vietnam. I'm pleased that the House of Representatives passed legislation to compensate this group of veterans and I am encouraged by this momentum in the Senate.
- **Recruiting and Retaining VA Physicians:** The VA has long struggled to recruit and retain highly qualified physicians. That's why I introduced the [VA Hiring Enhancement](#)

[Act](#) to change that trend and level the competitive playing field for the VA.

- **Preparing Arkansas's Workforce for 21st Century Jobs:** Congress recently passed the reauthorization of the [Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Act](#) and President Donald Trump signed it into law. Updating this law will help ensure our state is offering the training and education necessary for Arkansans to learn the skills that meet the needs of Arkansas industries to help our workforce thrive.
- **Helping Student Veterans Learn and Succeed:** Student veterans have access to additional benefits this school year as the VA continues implementing reforms to education benefits. I'm pleased to [support expanded benefits and eliminate unintentional financial burdens](#) for student veterans.
- **Recognizing Arkansas Veterans:** The 'Salute to Veterans' series honors the service and sacrifice of Arkansas veterans who served our nation in uniform. In the latest edition, I recognized Korean and Vietnam Wars veteran Pete Ross, who served in the Army and reenlisted to serve in the Air Force. [Hear more about his military career here.](#) His interview has been submitted to the Veterans History Project.
- **Connect on Social Media:** Stay up to date with what I'm doing for Arkansans via social media. You can find me on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



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