



December 1, 2020

The Honorable Asa Hutchinson
Governor
State of Arkansas
Little Rock, Arkansas

Dear Governor Hutchinson:

On behalf of the U.S. rice industry, thank you for your efforts in Arkansas to support the food and agriculture industries as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. We especially thank you for deeming agriculture workers as essential critical infrastructure workers to ensure our nation's food supply continues functioning successfully.

With recent positive news towards the development of COVID-19 vaccines, it's vital these vaccines are distributed to healthcare professionals and others working daily to treat and care for those who are sick or vulnerable to this disease, as well as the elderly and others who come face-to-face with the threat of this disease regularly.

As we continue to adapt to meet the food and nutrition needs of American consumers and others around the world in the face of this global pandemic, we respectfully ask that food and agriculture workers have priority access to COVID-19 vaccines. It is imperative these workers have every protection available to them for their health and safety as they continue to serve our nation.

Your leadership to overcome this pandemic is greatly appreciated by all those involved in the U.S. rice industry. Should you have any questions or concerns, please have your staff contact Ben Mosely, USA Rice vice president of government affairs, at bmosely@usarice.com or 571-217-2848. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsy Ward".

Betsy Ward
President & CEO
USA Rice

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Gairhan, Jr.".

David Gairhan, Jr.
Chair
Arkansas Rice Federation

Cc: The Honorable Wes Ward, Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture