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## **ARKANSAS BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION PROGRAM PARTNERS WITH ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ON PEST SURVEY**



*The Arkansas Boll Weevil Eradication Program announces a new partnership with the Arkansas Department of Agriculture to assist with statewide pest survey benefitting the cotton industry.*

**LITTLE ROCK, Ark.** (May 15, 2023) – The [Arkansas Boll Weevil Eradication Program](#) (ABWEP), the Arkansas cotton industry’s first line of defense against invasive pests, announces a new partnership with the [Arkansas Department of Agriculture](#) (Department) in conducting pest surveys across the state’s 32 cotton-producing counties. The survey will help detect the presence of pest populations in vulnerable cotton fields that could be potentially detrimental to cotton production if left untreated. Insights from this survey will inform the targeted implementation of necessary actions to eradicate any pests that are found before the crop is negatively impacted. ABWEP is conducting the survey with training and supplies provided by the Department.

“This is a great opportunity for ABWEP to work closely with the Department of Agriculture and prevent potential harm to cotton production in Arkansas,” said Arkansas Boll Weevil Eradication Program Executive Director [Regina Coleman](#). “Through this project, we are continuing our mission to serve growers and the state of Arkansas by protecting cotton production.”

The traps set in cotton fields will work to detect Old World bollworm, cotton cutworm, False codling moth, and cottonseed bug. All these invasive pests originate outside of the U.S. in Asia or Africa.

“The purpose of this survey is early detection,” said Arkansas Department of Agriculture Plant Industries Division Director and ABWEP board member [Scott Bray](#). “The earlier you find a pest, the more options you have to eradicate it before it becomes a serious issue.”

This survey is made possible through a grant awarded to the Arkansas Department of Agriculture’s [Cooperative Agriculture Pest Survey](#) (CAPS) program by the United States Department of Agriculture. The CAPS program conducts science-based surveys targeted at specific exotic and introduced plant pests identified as threats to U.S. agriculture or the environment.

ABWEP [began](#) eradication operations in Arkansas in 1997, making annual expansions that ultimately grew to include all cotton-producing [areas](#) in the state over time. ABWEP successfully eradicated the boll weevil in Arkansas in 2008. Since then, ABWEP continues to operate under a maintenance program monitoring the state for the presence of boll weevils, which is entirely a prevention effort.

Learn [more](#) about ABWEP and its mission to protect the Arkansas cotton industry, at [ABWEP.org](#). To learn more about the Arkansas Department of Agriculture, visit [agriculture.arkansas.gov](#).

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#### **ABOUT ARKANSAS BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION PROGRAM**

The Arkansas Boll Weevil Eradication Program is implemented by the Arkansas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation, an Arkansas nonprofit corporation. The program’s operations are overseen by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture. For more information, visit [ABWEP.org](#).

#### **ABOUT ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

The [Arkansas Department of Agriculture](#) is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture, forestry, and natural resources to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while conserving natural resources and ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. The Arkansas Department of Agriculture offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.