

Appendix 02

ARKANSAS CORN & GRAIN SORGHUM PROMOTION BOARD MEETING

Zoom Option: Day 1 of 2

Minutes

February 2, 2026

3:00 p.m.

Members Present In-Person: Kenny Falwell, Tommy Young, Patrick Matt Smith, Trent Dabbs, Matt Gammill, William Perry Galloway

Members Present via Zoom: Jason Felton

Members Absent: None

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dabbs welcomed all members and guests. With six members present and one online via Zoom, a quorum was established and confirmed by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture (Department).

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The board's previous meeting minutes were presented for review.

Motion to approve the board's November 11, 2025, meeting minutes; moved by Tommy Young, seconded by William Perry Galloway. Motion carried.

Chairman Dabbs then called for a motion to approve all the board's travel for the calendar year.

Motion to approve all board travel for 2026 calendar year; moved by Patrick Matt Smith, seconded by Matt Gammill. Motion carried.

Inoussa Zaki, Chief Financial Officer for the Arkansas Department of Agriculture, presented the board's financial report through January 31, 2026. **ATTACHMENT 1**

Zaki stated that the board started the 2026 calendar year with a balance of \$1.7 million. Gross collections between July 1 and January 2026 totaled \$779,766.

Zaki stated that the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture (UADA) set aside money totaling \$400,000 and \$86,000 in interest since the certificate of deposit was established.

Zaki stated that total expenditures during this reporting period totaled \$115,176 with \$43,000 in outstanding commitments, leaving the board with approximately \$2.8 million to fund future projects.

Appendix 02

Zaki stated that the department's 2024 legislative audit report findings showed that there was a data breach incident concerning payroll, but the department is already establishing procedures and policies to prevent something similar happening in the future.

Member Smith asked how much the board spent funding projects last year. Zaki answered that the board spent around \$1.3 million in the funding meeting last year.

Member Falwell asked UADA where the \$486,000 in unspent funds were being kept. Dr. Slaton provided an explanation and mentioned he was still investigating the matter.

Member Smith asked how often UADA pulls money out of these accounts, and Dr. Slaton indicated that they do not touch the account, further adding that they would consult the board prior to spending those funds. Discussion ensued.

Motion to approve the board's latest financial report prepared by the department; moved by Kenny Falwell, seconded by William Perry Galloway. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS GROUP REPORT

Jacquelynn LaBeff with the Communications Group provided the board with a marketing update report, addressing website traffic, website bounce and timing rates, pending updates, and campaign summaries. **ATTACHMENT 2**

Member Young asked about the mobile website issue their webpage was experiencing. LaBeff answered that the issue has been resolved.

PROMOTION PROJECT FUNDING PRESENTATIONS

Chairman Dabbs called for a promotion project presentation from Ouachita Baptist University, but the presenter was unavailable.

Ashley Wardlow with the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks requested \$12,500 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/1 for "Promoting Arkansas Corn and Grain Sorghum Through Regional Culinary Education." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 42**

Members of the Arkansas FFA provided a brief presentation, requesting \$50,000 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/1 for "Investment in the future of Arkansas Agriculture – Agricultural Education, Career Success, and FFA." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 44 & ATTACHMENT 4**

Member Falwell inquired about how much support in agriculture they have in Camden, and the presenter answered that timber is the largest industry in their area, with little row crop farmers. Discussion ensued.

Appendix 02

Stacy Witcher with the Cross County Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee requested \$10,000 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/1 for "Cross County Youth Ag Day." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 47**

Member Falwell asked how the project has performed in neighboring counties. The presenter indicated strong results, noting participation has grown to approximately 550 students this year.

Member Galloway asked about the AR Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom project. The presenter answered that the goal with their project is to reach additional students, as the current program struggles to meet demand.

The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) requested \$29,500 in total funding as a *recompete/new cycle funding request* for Year 1/1 for "NCGA Base and Action Team Funding." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 48 & ATTACHMENT 5**

Member Young asked Member Galloway which NCGA action team specialty area he felt was best to fund for Arkansas. Galloway mentioned that he had considered joining the 'production & sustainability' action team.

John Hinnners with the U.S. Meat Export Federation requested \$8,600 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/1 for "USMEF Membership: A U.S. Red Meat Promotion Partnership." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 49 & ATTACHMENT 6**

Member Falwell asked why they are not exporting to China. Hinner explained that a government-to-government issue has affected entities previously exporting beef to China.

Member Young noted that producers need increased consumption of the corn being grown. He also asked whether the other checkoff commodity boards have provided funding. Hinner answered that fifteen boards contribute to funding, representing approximately 7-8% of their portfolio.

Kristin Larey with the Ag Learning Center and the Four States Fair & Rodeo requested \$20,000 as a *recompete/new cycle funding request* for Year 1/1 for "Ag Learning Center Educational Program." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 2 & ATTACHMENT 7**

Rebecca Starrett with the US Grains & Bioproducts Council requested \$77,082 as a *recompete/new cycle funding request* for Year 1/1 for "The Time is Now: FY2026 Request for Funding." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 3 & ATTACHMENT 8**

Appendix 02

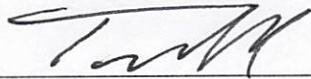
Member Young noted that the promotion project offers a way to invest corn board funds at a national level and estimated a 3:1 return on investment. Starrett stated that they would gather the supporting figures and report back to the board.

Chris Henry with the UADA requested \$10,000 as a ***recompete/new cycle funding request*** for Year 9 of "The Arkansas Irrigation Yield Contest." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 35 & ATTACHMENT 9**

Julie Robinson with the UADA requested \$5,000 as a ***continuous funding request*** for Year 2/3 for the "Arkansas Future Ag Leaders Tour." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 36 & ATTACHMENT 10**

RECESS

Motion to recess the funding meeting until tomorrow morning at 9:00am; moved by Tommy Young, seconded by William Perry Galloway. Motion carried.



Trent Dabbs, Chairman



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