

The Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries and the Alabama Agricultural Statistics Service are proud to present the 46th edition of *Alabama Agricultural Statistics*. The numbers contained in this publication are a testimony to the importance of agriculture in the state. Agriculture is the No. 1 industry in Alabama. Agriculture receipts for 2003 total over \$4 billion, with over \$40 billion impacting the state's economy. The agriculture industry employs over 467,000 people, constituting 21 percent of the state's workforce. I am committed to helping our farmers and producers maintain their success in the coming year.

Ron Sparks
Commissioner

We are proud to present this 46th volume of *Alabama Agricultural Statistics*. The numbers contained inside this edition are a reflection of the agricultural industry and the significance it has to the State's economy. I would like to thank the countless farmers who have provided the basic farm information to compile this report. Their service to agriculture is invaluable to many businesses, elected officials, universities, and others who rely on agricultural statistics. I would also like to thank our enumerator corps for their dedication and professionalism in collecting the raw data. And finally, a much deserved thanks to the Alabama Statistical Office staff for compiling the bulletin.

In special recognition, I would like to dedicate this year's bulletin to the outstanding service and dedication of William (Tim) Placke, the Deputy Director of the Alabama Statistical Office, who is retiring this year after 38 years of service to USDA. Tim's efforts to improve and enhance this book have resulted in many compliments and positive comments on the attractiveness and usefulness of the data. Thanks Tim and best wishes in your retirement!

Herb Vanderberry
State Statistician