



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

NATIONAL BAT WEEK
October 24–31, 2018

By the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS bats provide important ecological services that contribute substantially to the economy of the United States by protecting American forests and agriculture from crop-damaging insect pests and by providing the fundamental benefit of pollination; and

WHEREAS recent bat population losses from white-nose syndrome and other factors require attention to ensure the sustainability of our food production systems, avoid additional economic impact on the agricultural sector, and protect environmental health; and

WHEREAS the U.S. Department of Agriculture is providing a national response to the spread of white-nose syndrome by co-leading an interagency and international team focusing on bat research, inventory, and monitoring as part of a science-based strategy to reduce the disease's impact on bat populations; and

WHEREAS it is critically important to continue Federal efforts, including developing new public-private partnerships and increasing citizen engagement, to promote the health of bat populations; increase the quality and quantity of bat roosting and foraging habitat; and help restore bat populations to healthy levels;

NOW, THEREFORE, in recognition of the vital significance of protecting the health of bat populations, I, Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture, do hereby proclaim October 24–31, 2018, as National Bat Week. I call upon all Americans to join me in celebrating the significance of bats with appropriate observances and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 10th day of August 2018, the two-hundred forty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America.

SONNY PERDUE
Secretary