



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

MEDIA ADVISORY

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- Who:** Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson
- What:** Press Conference to Kick-Off the Annual Sale of Junior Champions
- When:** Thursday, February 9, 2023, at 10:30 a.m.
Press Conference takes place prior to the Sale of Junior Champions beginning at 11:00 a.m.
- Where:** Atrium of the Trade Mart on the Mississippi State Fairgrounds

Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson to Hold Press Conference to Kick-Off the 2023 Dixie National Sale of Junior Champions

STATE FAIRGROUNDS, Miss. – The media is invited to attend as Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson kicks off the 54th annual Dixie National Sale of Junior Champions with a press conference on Thursday, February 9, at 10:30 a.m. in the Atrium of the Mississippi Trade Mart. The Sale will begin at 11:00 a.m. in Trade Hall C of the Mississippi Trade Mart. Commissioner Gipson will be joined by Dr. Steve Martin, Interim Director of the Mississippi State University Extension Service; Gary Blair, Chairman of the Sale of Junior Champions Promotion Committee; two recipients of the Sale of Champions Scholarships, Emma Grace Koger from the Humphreys 4-H and Calden Ratliff from the Stone 4-H/Stone County FFA; Phillip Morgan, CEO of Southern AgCredit; and Rorey Lemmel of Harper & Morgan Rodeo.

The Dixie National Sale of Junior Champions is one of the highlight events of the Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo. In 2022, 1,538 4-H and FFA members from across Mississippi participated in the Dixie National Junior Round-Up Livestock Shows showing 2,262 head of various livestock including pigs, sheep, cattle and goats. The Junior Round-Up participants winning Champion and Reserve Champion for their market animals have the opportunity to sell their livestock at the Sale of Junior Champions auction. Last year, the sale of 46 animals grossed \$448,500, and 39 scholarships totaling \$61,500 were awarded. Over the past 53 years, the sale has grossed \$8,524,244.40. Since the first scholarships were given in 1993, over 797 scholarships have been awarded to various 4-H and FFA members totaling \$1,071,200.

This sale promotes both 4-H and FFA livestock programs in Mississippi as well as other economic, educational and personal development opportunities for the youth in state. The Sale of Junior Champions helps students earn money for college, as well as helps them to develop a wide host of skills. The youth participating in the livestock show spend months raising and caring for their livestock, teaching them the value of hard work and responsibility.

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