



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson Announces Organic Certification Cost-Share Program

JACKSON, Miss. – Today, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson announced that the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) is offering a cost-share program for Mississippi organic producers and handlers receiving certification or continuation of certification by a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) accredited certifying agent.

“This cost-share program is a great opportunity for our Mississippi producers and handlers of agricultural products who are obtaining or renewing their certification under the National Organic Program through USDA to receive assistance,” said Commissioner Gipson. “I encourage all those eligible for this program to take full advantage and submit your application now.”

Funding is available for those that received the certification between October 1, 2022, and September 30, 2023. Individual organic operators are eligible for reimbursement of 75 percent of their fiscal year 2023 certification costs up to a maximum of \$750 per certification scope. The National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program currently recognizes the following certification scopes eligible for reimbursement: crops, wild crops, livestock and handling such as processing.

In order to be eligible for reimbursement, applicants must provide MDAC with proof of valid certification issued by a USDA accredited certifying agent; a reimbursement application form; an itemized receipt that identifies allowable costs paid within the qualification period; and an IRS W-9 form. Applicants must be Mississippi organic producers and handlers located within the state. Funds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis until the funds are depleted. Operations may receive one reimbursement per year. The deadline to submit applications is Tuesday, November 1, 2023.

For more information about this program or to obtain an application, visit www.mdac.ms.gov/market-development/national-organic-cost-share-program or contact Susan Lawrence at susan@mdac.ms.gov or 601-213-7542.

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