



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 20, 2024

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**Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson Announces 2024 Mississippi Ag Youth Council Members
*Bolivar, Jones, Kemper, Lauderdale, Lee, Leflore, Oktibbeha, Rankin, Sunflower, Tippah, Tishomingo
and Winston Counties Represented***

JACKSON, Miss. – Today, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson announced the members of the 2024-2025 Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council. High school senior, Claire Rizzo of Bolivar County, was among the 14 student finalists chosen to serve on the 2024 Ag Youth Council. Claire, daughter of Phil and Mary Rizzo, attends the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science in Columbus.

The other high school seniors selected include Gracyn Foster of Jones County; Emma Creel of Kemper County; John Clayton Kitchens of Lauderdale County; Grey Cruse of Lee County; Micah Osborn and Sloan Walker of Leflore County; Bryce Bratcher of Oktibbeha County; Azion Leflore and Layton Varner of Rankin County; Emma Grace Putnam of Sunflower County; Hannah Hill of Tippah County; Kayleigh Rose Myers of Tishomingo County; and Alana Whitehead of Winston County. Members were chosen through an application process and were interviewed by a committee of representatives from the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC).

“I want to congratulate these students who have been selected to serve on this year’s Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council,” said Commissioner Gipson. “This honor is well deserved by these exceptional and hardworking youth. Our agency originally began this council in order to expand the next generation’s knowledge of our state’s largest industry, agriculture, and the vast opportunities it offers. Our future workforce depends on our youth, and the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is dedicated to keeping our bright and talented young people in our great state, where they can continue to learn and work to keep Mississippi flourishing for years to come.”

The 2024 Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council is comprised of 14 high school seniors with an interest in agriculture. The goal of this council is to expose the students to a variety of agriculture career fields and to teach them how to advocate for various aspects of the agriculture industry. Council members will

visit agricultural companies and organizations, learn about the legislative process and how it affects the agriculture industry, hold discussions with industry professionals, and hone career-development skills. Council members will serve for one year, from August 2024 to June 2025, and attend a minimum of four meetings at the MDAC headquarters located in Jackson.

For more information about the Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council, visit www.mdac.ms.gov/mayc or contact Nick Hall at nick@mdac.ms.gov.

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Photo attached.



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