



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 7, 2024

Contact: Paige Manning, Director of Marketing and Public Relations
(601) 359-1163 / cell: (662) 312-5897
Paige@mdac.ms.gov

Hannah East, Marketing Specialist
(601) 359-1179
HannahE@mdac.ms.gov

Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson Recognizes October as Mississippi Agritourism Month

JACKSON, Miss. – Today, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson held a press conference announcing October as Mississippi Agritourism Month at a local agritourism operation, Moseley Meadows Farm in Gluckstadt. Governor Tate Reeves recently signed a proclamation designating October as Agritourism Month.

Commissioner Gipson was joined by Benton Moseley, owner of Moseley Meadows Farm, and Stanley Wise, president of the Mississippi Agritourism Association, as well as several farmers from other agritourism operations around the state. Mississippi is currently home to 103 registered agritourism farms.

“Today, we are proud to promote the farmers and farm families that keep agritourism growing in Mississippi,” said Commissioner Gipson. “Not only do these farms have a positive impact on our ag industry, as they are still a producing enterprise, but they also build up Mississippi’s tourism industry. These venues provide the unique opportunity of introducing people who would not normally encounter this kind of lifestyle to a working farm. Agritourism operations provide an educational and fun experience for all ages to learn more about where our food, fiber and shelter comes from.”

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) administers the Mississippi Agritourism Limited Liability Program. These farms offer a variety of experiences for visitors including pumpkin patches, hayrides, corn mazes, kids’ activities, petting zoos, Christmas trees, u-picks and much more. Find registered agritourism operations in Mississippi, and more information, now at www.msagritourism.org. Visitors can also filter through farms by selecting specific activities they would like to participate in.

In addition, Commissioner Gipson recognized Amanda Crawford with Cagle Farm in Kosciusko, one of the oldest farms within MDAC’s Centennial Farm Family Program. The Cagle Farm celebrated 175 years of operation this week.

“My message today to all farmers is to keep on farming,” continued Gipson. “I know it’s difficult, but Americans depend on our farmers for everything, for our very survival. There is a no more important job than farming, and I want to thank all our Mississippi farmers for continuing to provide for us all. It is quite a feat for farms to be in operation for 100 years or more, so our agency is making concerted efforts to revamp our Centennial Farm Family Program and honor these incredible families.”

The Centennial Farm Family Program was established in 1976 under former Agriculture Commissioner Jim Buck Ross to honor Mississippi families who have owned and operated a farm or ranch for 100 years or more. Since 1976, over 260 farm families have qualified and been presented an official certificate recognizing their farm as a Centennial Farm.

###

Photo attached.



Today, Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson held a press conference recognizing Mississippi Agritourism Month at Moseley Meadows Farm in Gluckstadt. Pictured L-R: Lynn and Jim Newman of Farmer Jim’s Pumpkin Patch & Corn Maze in Rolling Fork; Stanley Wise, President of the Mississippi Agritourism Association; Benton and Kate Moseley of Moseley Meadows Farm in Canton; Commissioner Gipson; Lisa Cross and Shane Pickard of Back 40 Pumpkin Patch in Pelahatchie; Dana Nowell of Twelve2 Farm in Taylor; and Wendy and John Ellis, and their granddaughter Waverlee, of Red Bird Farms, LLC, in Kosciusko.