



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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MDAC Releases Agritourism-Themed Podcast Episode in Conjunction with Agritourism Month *Special Guests from Calhoun, Madison and Pontotoc Counties Join the Freshly Picked Podcast*

JACKSON, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) was proud to host the sixth episode of its Freshly Picked podcast series, titled “Field of Dreams: Harvesting Fun with Mississippi Agritourism,” which was released publicly today at 9:30 a.m. This agritourism-themed episode spotlights local guests Stanley Wise, owner of Wise Family Farms and president of the Mississippi Agritourism Association; Benton Moseley, owner of Moseley Meadows Farm; and Amber Dauzat, extension agent with Mississippi State University (MSU) and secretary of the Vardaman Sweet Potato Festival.

“This episode was particularly exciting for us because October is designated as Agritourism Month in Mississippi,” said Podcast Host and Editor of MDAC’s *Mississippi Market Bulletin* Claude Nash. “Whether you’re interested in farm-to-table education, outdoor adventures or the sweet side of agriculture, this episode is for you! Listeners will also hear about upcoming festivals, the Genuine MS® branding program and even some tasty sweet potato recipes.”

During this episode, Wise shares personal insight on how his farm, located in Pontotoc, has evolved with the ever-changing times. And as president of the Mississippi Agritourism Association, he recounted the changes he has seen over the years across a multitude of working farms and the crops that make agritourism thrive. Mississippi is currently home to 103 agritourism operations statewide. Owner of one of these agritourism operations, Benton Moseley, talked with Host Nash and fellow guests about Moseley Meadows’ transition to the agritourism industry as a way to diversify his farm and supplement their family’s income. Moseley’s unique operation in Gluckstadt changes with the seasons, from pumpkin patches and corn pits during the fall to a Christmas tree destination in the wintertime.

Dauzat brought a unique perspective to the conversation with her extensive knowledge of agricultural event planning. In addition to her daily duties as an MSU extension agent, she assists with the promotion and preparation of the annual Vardaman Sweet Potato Festival. Dauzat speaks about her passion for supporting Mississippi’s sweet potato industry and the vibrant festival that celebrates it. She describes the

importance of local festivals, fairs and events like the Vardaman Sweet Potato Festival, and their direct impact on the state’s agriculture and agritourism industries.

Hear their extraordinary stories and more at www.msfreshlypicked.com and on all major podcast platforms.

The Freshly Picked podcast series, developed by MDAC, will feature 24 episodes and include specialty crop farmers, experts, entrepreneurs and/or chefs as they tell the stories behind their farms, businesses and the unique products they offer. Listeners can find new episodes every Thursday through February 2025 at www.msfreshlypicked.com, Spotify, Apple Podcasts or other major platforms.

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Photo attached.



The latest episode of MDAC’s Freshly Picked podcast, titled “Field of Dreams: Harvesting Fun with Mississippi Agritourism,” airs today at 9:30 a.m. Pictured L-R: Stanley Wise of Wise Family Farms and president of the Mississippi Agritourism Association; Claude Nash, podcast host and editor of MDAC’s *Mississippi Market Bulletin*; Amber Dausat, MSU extension agent and secretary of the Vardaman Sweet Potato Festival; and Benton Moseley of Moseley Meadows Farm.