



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 26, 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

MDAC Release Latest Podcast Featuring Guests from Hinds and Oktibbeha Counties
Award-Winning Chef Nick Wallace and Ag Economist Elizabeth Canales Join the Conversation

JACKSON, Miss. – Today, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) releases the latest episode, “Fresh Starts and New Year’s Traditions with Mississippi’s Specialty Crops,” of its Freshly Picked podcast series. This episode features special guests Nick Wallace, an award-winning chef and owner of Nick Wallace Culinary based in Jackson, and Elizabeth Canales, PhD, an associate professor and extension economist with Mississippi State University in Starkville.

Wallace and Canales cover a multitude of topics with Podcast Host Claude Nash in this special episode ahead of the New Year. Wallace shares with listeners how he incorporates both his southern roots and learned, French techniques to create an all-new cuisine that is unique to Mississippi. He credits his culinary creativity to his grandmother, saying “living on the farm with my grandmother, I always saw creativity, and it was unmatched.” He also emphasizes the value of continuing to source fresh produce and ingredients from local farms for his restaurants and catering business today. Wallace goes on to share his expertise on how to best prepare and boost the flavors of traditional New Year’s foods, like black-eyed peas, turnip greens, collards and carrots.

Dr. Canales provides a unique perspective to the conversation as an expert with a finger on the pulse of Mississippi’s agriculture community. Her work through Mississippi State University’s Extension Program supports and promotes both farmers and suppliers around the state. Within this episode, she describes the health and nutritional benefits of staple New Year’s foods, which are also specialty crops, and the resources available to consumers and producers. Canales also talks about her vision for empowering local farmers through education and sustainability in 2025. Tune in to this special New Year’s inspired episode today by visiting www.msfreshlypicked.com or any major podcast platform.

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.

###

Photo attached.



The latest episode of MDAC’s Freshly Picked podcast, titled “Fresh Starts and New Year’s Traditions with Mississippi’s Specialty Crops,” airs today at 9:30 a.m. Pictured L-R: Nick Wallace, award-winning chef and owner of Nick Wallace Culinary in Jackson; Dr. Elizabeth Canales, associate professor and extension economist with Mississippi State University in Starkville; and Claude Nash, podcast host and editor of MDAC’s *Mississippi Market Bulletin*.