



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS STATEMENT

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Ag Commissioner Recognizes Multiple Pieces of New Legislation Supporting Mississippi Agriculture and Consumers

JACKSON, Miss. – Following the conclusion of the 2025 Legislative Session, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson issued the following statement regarding the passage of multiple bills impacting Mississippi's agriculture industry.

“Agriculture remains the backbone of Mississippi's economy, and in the dire times that our farmers are currently experiencing, we appreciate the positive policies enacted to support Mississippi Agriculture. I was encouraged by the several significant pieces of legislation approved during the 2025 Legislative Session that should positively impact our farmers and ranchers. I want to publicly thank Governor Reeves, Lieutenant Governor Hosemann, Speaker White and members of Mississippi Legislature for supporting and moving these important bills through the process on both sides of the Capitol.

- **HB 953** (Harvest Permits) extends the repealer on the provisions of the law that provide for the maximum weight of harvest permit vehicles and require certain harvest permit holders to get prior approval for their routes for three years. This bill ensures that producers can transport commodities in a more efficient manner, saving time and money. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2025.
- **House Bill 1878** (Ad Valorem Tax) specifies provisions for determining the true value of rural structures for ad valorem tax assessment purposes. This bill provides a much-needed valuation adjustment to the drastic 10-year property tax increases previously scheduled for poultry houses and other ag structures throughout Mississippi. At a time when farmers are struggling with unprecedented inflationary operational costs, this bill will provide ad valorem tax relief for farmers in the near-term. The bill was effective as of January 1, 2025.
- **Senate Bill 2266** (Sales Tax) requires the Department of Revenue to publish a list of items by August 1, 2025, that are eligible for any sales tax exemption or reduced sales tax rate for the holder of a commercial farmer permit. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2025.

- **House Bill 602** (Seafood and Crawfish Country of Origin Labeling) calls for the expansion of country of origin labeling for seafood. The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) and the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources are jointly charged with the regulation of wholesalers, processors, retailers and food service establishments to ensure that foreign seafood is clearly labeled as “imported.” This bill also establishes a Mississippi Seafood Marketing Taskforce, which includes MDAC, to make recommendations for the regulation of seafood marketing and seafood testing. This bill will allow consumers to make better informed purchasing decisions regarding Gulf Coast seafood versus foreign imports. This bill becomes effective July 1.
- **House Bill 1006** (Cultivate Food Products) prohibits the manufacture and sale of items produced from cultured animal cells in Mississippi. This bill addresses so-called “lab grown meat” products that have begun to creep into markets globally and nationally, which is a serious concern for our hardworking producers. Mississippi consumers deserve to know the beef, poultry and pork purchased and served to their families is real farm-raised meat, not something cultivated in a petri-dish. Inspections for this will become part of the routine inspections by MDAC’s Consumer Protection Division. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2025.
- **House Bill 913** (Meat Labeling) calls for truth-in-labeling for meat and nonmeat products by processors, retail and food establishments prior to final sale. This bill protects the integrity of Mississippi’s livestock and meat industry and ensures consumers will be able to make informed purchasing decisions based on accurate labeling. MDAC’s Consumer Protection Division will incorporate these inspections into routine inspections of retail food establishments. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2025.
- **House Bill 1295** (Agritourism Activity) and its companion bill, **Senate Bill 2264** (Agritourism Activity) revises the definition of agritourism to provide added protections for Mississippi agritourism operations through clarification and signage on farms. Under the new law, agritourism operations registered with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce must display signage at the entrance of the agritourism location rather than at the location of each activity. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2025.
- **Senate Bill 2204** (Law Enforcement of Agriculture-Related Crimes) requires any theft, burglary, robbery or attempted theft, burglary or robbery of agriculture-related vehicles, livestock, timber, grain or agriculture-related chemicals to be reported to MDAC’s Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB). This bill also requires MALTB to maintain a registry of reports of stolen agriculture-related vehicles. The registry will help facilitate communication between law enforcement agencies, allowing our MALTB investigators to better protect and serve Mississippi’s agriculture community. MDAC is currently establishing a registry as required. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2025.
- **Senate Bill 2025** (Plant and Soil Amendments) adds definitions of beneficial substance and plant biostimulants. This bill seeks to establish a standard, uniform label law across the country for the regulation of products and manufacturers pertaining to beneficial substances for soil and plants. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2025.
- **Senate Bill 2383** (State Vegetable) designates the sweet potato as the official state vegetable of Mississippi. I am especially proud of the passage of this bill which spotlights one of our state’s top crops. Sweet potato production in Mississippi is an \$82 million industry, making us the third largest producer of sweet potatoes in the United States. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2025.

Once again, I want to show appreciation to the Mississippi Legislature for their continued advocacy and efforts on behalf of our farmers, ranchers and producers. Mississippi is an agricultural powerhouse, with our farmers serving as the backbone of the state's economy and way of life. They face challenges every day, yet they continue to provide the food, fiber and shelter we all need. I applaud the legislation and policies passed this year to help our agriculture industry thrive."

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