



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 19, 2025

Contact: Hannah East, Marketing Specialist
(601) 359-1179 / cell: (662) 816-3230
HannahE@mdac.ms.gov

2024-2025 Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council Holds Final Meeting
Students from Bolivar, Itawamba, Jones, Kemper, Lauderdale, Lee, Leflore, Oktibbeha, Rankin, Sunflower, Tippah and Winston Counties Were Recognized at Closing Ceremony

JACKSON, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce’s (MDAC) 2024-2025 Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council (MAYC) held its final meeting last week. Fourteen high school seniors from across the state came together for educational tours and closing ceremonies. The council visited Patina Farms in Canton and Cypress Point in Brandon, where they gained insight into Mississippi agritourism through hands-on experiences, before being presented with certificates of achievement.

“Investing in our youth today shapes the future of agriculture tomorrow,” said Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson. “I am proud of this group of students and the initiative they have shown toward the agriculture industry. The Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council cultivates leadership and responsibility in the next generation of our great state’s workforce, and I believe our future is bright.”

MAYC members met with owners, managers and employees of two major agritourism operations in central Mississippi. Together, the students held open discussions about the challenges and advantages of turning a working farm into a tourist attraction. Following the tours, each student was presented with a certificate of achievement by MDAC Deputy Commissioner Hayes Patrick. “I want to congratulate the 2024-2025 Ag Youth Council. I expect great things for our state, our agriculture industry and even our nation from this remarkable group,” continued Commissioner Gipson.

The MAYC is a workforce development program established by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce that seeks to expose agriculture-minded high school seniors to a variety of unique experiences within the agriculture industry. Over the course of one year, council members toured farms, agricultural companies and state agencies; visited the State Capitol and learned first-hand about the legislative process and how it affects the agriculture industry; held roundtable discussions with industry professionals, legislators and farmers; and developed communicative and practical skills.

Visit www.mdac.ms.gov/mayc for program guidelines and additional information. Questions regarding the Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council can be submitted to Peyton Pierce at peyton@mdac.ms.gov.

###

Photos attached.



The 2024-2025 Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council toured Patina Farms in Canton as part of their final meeting. Pictured Front Row (L-R): Claire Rizzo of Bolivar County; Greyson Foster of Jones County; Layton Varner of Rankin County; Azion Leflore of Rankin County; Micah Osborn of Leflore County; Alana Whitehead of Winston County; and Peyton Pierce, Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council Coordinator at MDAC. Back Row (L-R): Jenna Fullington, Agriculture Internship and Livestock Coordinator at MDAC; Hannah Hill of Tippah County; Grey Cruse of Lee County; John Clayton Kitchens of Lauderdale County; Sloan Walker of Leflore County; Kayleigh Rose Myers of Itawamba County; and Emma Creel of Kemper County.



The 2024-2025 Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council toured Cypress Point in Brandon as part of their final meeting. Pictured L-R: Hannah Hill of Tippah County; Azion Leflore of Rankin County; Kayleigh Rose Myers of Itawamba County; Layton Varner of Rankin County; Sloan Walker of Leflore County; Claire Rizzo of Bolivar County; Emma Creel of Kemper County; John Clayton Kitchens of Lauderdale County; Grey Cruse of Lee County; Micah Osborn of Leflore County; Alana Whitehead of Winston County; and Greyson Foster of Jones County.

Not Pictured: Emma G. Putnum of Sunflower County and Bryce Bratcher of Oktibbeha County.