



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

MEDIA ADVISORY

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What: Press Conference to Kick-Off Annual Sale of Junior Champions

When: Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.
Press Conference takes place prior to the Sale of Junior
Champions, which begins at 11:00 a.m.

Where: Trade Mart Atrium at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds

Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson to Hold Press Conference to Kick-Off the 2026 Dixie National Sale of Junior Champions

STATE FAIRGROUNDS, Miss. – The media is invited to attend as Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson kicks off the 57th annual Dixie National Sale of Junior Champions with a press conference on Thursday, February 12, at 10:00 a.m. in the Atrium of the Mississippi Trade Mart.

The sale will begin at 11:00 a.m. in Trade Hall C of the Mississippi Trade Mart. Commissioner Gipson will be joined by Dr. Angus Catchot, Director of the Mississippi State University Extension Service; Hunter Taylor, Chairman of the Sale of Junior Champions Promotion Committee; Abby Dugas, Ag Education Program Supervisor with the Mississippi FFA; two recipients of the Sale of Champions Scholarships, Mississippi 4-H President Morgan White with Oktibbeha County 4-H and Maggie Claire Todd with West Jones FFA; Whitney Watts, Insurance Specialist with Southern AgCredit; and Rorey Lemmel of the Harper & Morgan Rodeo Company.

The Dixie National Sale of Junior Champions is one of the highlight events of the Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo. The Junior Round-Up participants winning Champion and Reserve Champion for their market animals have the opportunity to sell their livestock at the Sale of Junior Champions auction.

In 2025, 1,269 4-H and FFA members from across Mississippi participated in the Dixie National Junior Round-Up Livestock Shows showing 1,941 head livestock. Last year's record-setting sale featured 49 champion market animals, grossing \$591,287 and raising \$85,00 in scholarships for 41 students. This sale promotes both 4-H and FFA livestock programs in Mississippi as well as other economic, educational and personal development opportunities for the youth across the state. The Sale of Junior Champions helps students earn money for college and develop a wide host of skills.

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Media Note: Commissioner Gipson and other speakers will be available for interviews following the press conference.