



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Federal Indictments Handed Down Following MALT B Investigation

JACKSON, Miss. – This week, federal indictments were handed down following an investigation by the Mississippi Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALT B) in 2022.

“I am proud of our Ag Theft law enforcement team,” said Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson. “They work every day to protect Mississippians across our rural communities and their property, while holding criminals accountable. This years-long investigation is a testament to their determination and commitment to ensuring justice is served.”

The Mississippi Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau started an investigation in November of 2022 into the theft of an airplane engine from a farm hanger which led to the recovery of a large cache of stolen equipment in Sunflower and Issaquena counties. Since then, the investigation continued with MALT B partnering with federal investigators from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Federal Aviation Administration; Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General; and the United States Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Mississippi.

As a result of the investigation, Christopher Douglas Showah, 51, of Indianola, has been sentenced to 96 months in federal prison after pleading guilty to three felonies. According to court documents, Showah pleaded guilty to possession of firearms by a convicted felon, flying without a valid airman’s certificate, and fraud relating to maintenance work performed on an aircraft donated to Delta State University for their aviation program.

“This investigation was a joint effort among local, state and federal partners all dedicated to seeing that the parties involved go through the justice system regardless of the time it takes,” said MALT B Director Dean Barnard. “I want to commend the efforts of our own Ag Theft investigators for their tireless work and persistence in this case, which resulted in the recovery of stolen agricultural property and the seizure of nearly 40 illegal firearms.”

The MALT B, the law enforcement division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, enforces state laws pertaining to the theft of cattle, horses, swine, poultry, fish, farm equipment, chemicals, timber and all other farm or agriculture-related crimes. Visit <http://msagtheft.org/> to learn more. To report or provide information regarding an agricultural crime, call (800) 678-2660.

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