



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Agriculture Commissioner Says Local Farmers Markets Help Mississippians Save on Food Costs

JACKSON, Miss. – With it being National Farmers Market Week, Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson says farmers markets provide Mississippians with access to a wide variety of fresh, wholesome, locally produced foods while helping families save money through a sales tax exemption on many qualifying products.

"Purchasing farm products direct from the producer saves consumers money as many farm products like produce and honey are sales tax exempt. As an added benefit for consumers concerned about food costs, shopping at farmers markets certified by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) increases savings and stretches the dollar even further. Food products that are grown, made or processed in Mississippi and sold at an MDAC Certified Farmers Market are exempt from state sales tax," Gipson said. "This includes products such as fruits and vegetables, dairy products, meat, eggs, honey, non-ornamental plants and other specialty foods. These locally produced foods provide healthy, affordable options for Mississippi families while demonstrating that our farmers are part of the solution to ensuring a safe, abundant and affordable food supply."

Consumers do not pay the state's five percent grocery sales tax on eligible food products sold directly by farmers or on qualifying value-added food products sold at MDAC Certified Farmers Markets.

Mississippi is home to nearly 80 farmers markets, including 40 certified through MDAC's Certified Farmers Market Program. To qualify for certification, a farmers market must include at least two Mississippi growers or producers.

"Farmers and producers are essential partners in our mission to ensure Mississippians have access to healthy, abundant and affordable food," Gipson added. "Together, we're building a healthier Mississippi, one farm, one family, and one meal at a time."

To learn more about Mississippi farmers markets, visit www.msfarmersmarket.com. A statewide map of farmers markets is available at <https://agnet.mdac.ms.gov/website/FarmersMarkets/FarmersMarkets>. For more information about MDAC's Certified Farmers Market Program, contact Katie Sansing at katie@mdac.ms.gov.

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