



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 11, 2022

Contact: Paige Manning, Director of Marketing and Public Relations
(601) 359-1163 / cell: (662) 312-5897
Paige@mdac.ms.gov

Hannah East, Marketing Specialist
(601) 359-1179
HannahE@mdac.ms.gov

CEMCO Cuts Ribbon to New Livestock Processing Facility in Greene County

LEAKESVILLE, Miss. – Cutting Edge Meat Company (CEMCO) of Greene County officially cut the ribbon to its new USDA-inspected red meat processing facility in Leakesville. CEMCO was awarded a grant in the amount of \$350,000 to assist with the cost of purchasing equipment by the Mississippi Land, Water and Timber Resources Board (LWTRB.)

The Board, co-chaired by Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson and Interim Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) Laura Hipp, approved funding to expand currently operating USDA-inspected processing facilities and construct new USDA-inspected facilities in order to increase the capacity of livestock processing in the state.

“During the pandemic, there was a major backlog of farmers needing cattle slaughtered and processed in Mississippi,” said Commissioner Gipson. “This new facility is of great importance not only to cattle producers, but to the entire agriculture industry. Through this grant, the board was able to provide CEMCO with processing equipment. I applaud the efforts of the Mississippi Land, Water and Timber Resources Board to increase the livestock processing capacity in the state, and I look forward to future announcements as additional facilities come online.”

“Mississippi is the prime location for companies such as CEMCO, which source their meat from farmers throughout the state, enabling them to successfully get their products to market while providing quality meat products to consumers in Mississippi and the U.S. MDA is proud to support to the CEMCO team as they begin operations in Greene County and create more than a dozen new job opportunities for the area’s workforce,” said MDA Interim Executive Director Hipp.

CEMCO began operations in November of 2021 and offers fee-based meat processing services for livestock producers and retailers. The new facility also includes retail space offering locally raised beef and pork products. Meats currently processed at CEMCO include beef, pork, lamb and goats. Additional

processing services will yield value-added smoked products, including sausage and bacon. The facility is currently processing 40 livestock, averaging 20,000 pounds of processed product, every week.

“This project has created 18 fulltime and seven part-time jobs for our community. Future plans include expanding processing to 60 livestock per week and offering additional value-added products,” said CEMCO Owner Scott Hicks.

###

Photo attached.



Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson joined Scott and Michelle Hicks of Cutting Edge Meat Company (CEMCO) as they officially cut the ribbon to a new USDA-inspected red meat processing facility in Leakesville. CEMCO was awarded a grant in the amount of \$350,000 to assist with the cost of purchasing processing equipment by the Mississippi Land, Water and Timber Resources Board.