



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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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

MDAC Hosts Historic Inbound Trade Mission and Timber Products Showcase

JACKSON, Miss. – This week, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) and the Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) hosted timber buyers from the Dominican Republic, Mexico, United Kingdom, Spain and Vietnam.

"Forestry is Mississippi's third largest agricultural sector, and I am delighted with the efforts put forward by our agency's Timber Commerce Division to host multiple trade delegates from several countries," said Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson. "This historic, cooperative project has brought together stakeholders with the purpose of strengthening Mississippi's timber industry and opening important international trade markets that have been untapped by our producers statewide."

The trade delegation toured Jones Lumber Company in Natchez, Weyerhaeuser Pearl River Nursery in Hazlehurst and Thomasson Lumber Company in Macon before attending the first-ever Mississippi Timber Products Showcase at the Mississippi Trade Mart. During the showcase, these international trade delegates held business to business meetings and visited with Mississippi timber exporters from around the state.

MDAC provided the visiting timber buyers with a look into the entire process of Mississippi's timber industry from seedling to sawmill. In addition to leaders in the timber industry and top logging companies, trade delegates and exporters alike met with logistics experts in transportation and international shipping ports located in the state. The tours included demonstrations from harvesting outfits, as well as translating facilities, of hardwoods and southern yellow pine softwoods, which exhibited the extensive capacity and sustainability of Mississippi timber.

"It was a pleasure to represent the Port of Gulfport at the Mississippi Timber Product Showcase and highlight the role we can play in helping connect international consumers with high quality Mississippi goods. By working together with thriving Mississippi industries such as forest products, we can continue to drive growth for the state's economy and create great jobs for Mississippians," said Jon Nass, CEO & Executive Director of Mississippi State Port Authority at Gulfport.

“We were honored to participate in the first Mississippi State organized Timber conference where we had the opportunity to connect and interact with some of our trading partners and were exposed to potential business that will expand our commercial base and increase exports. Our sincere thanks to Ginger Williamson from the Department of Agriculture for the invitation to a well-organized event,” said Rafael Quesada, Director of Trade Development with the Port of Pascagoula. “We saw a lot of interest from several participating parties and are hopeful for the continued development of these newfound relationships across the waters.”

Visit www.mdac.ms.gov/forestryandtimber to learn more about the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce’s Timber Commerce Division.

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Photos attached.



Kevin Barfield, Manager of the Weyerhaeuser Pearl River Nursery, describes the process of seedling production for Mississippi pine trees to visiting international trade delegates during MDAC’s Mississippi Inbound Trade Mission and Timber Products Showcase.



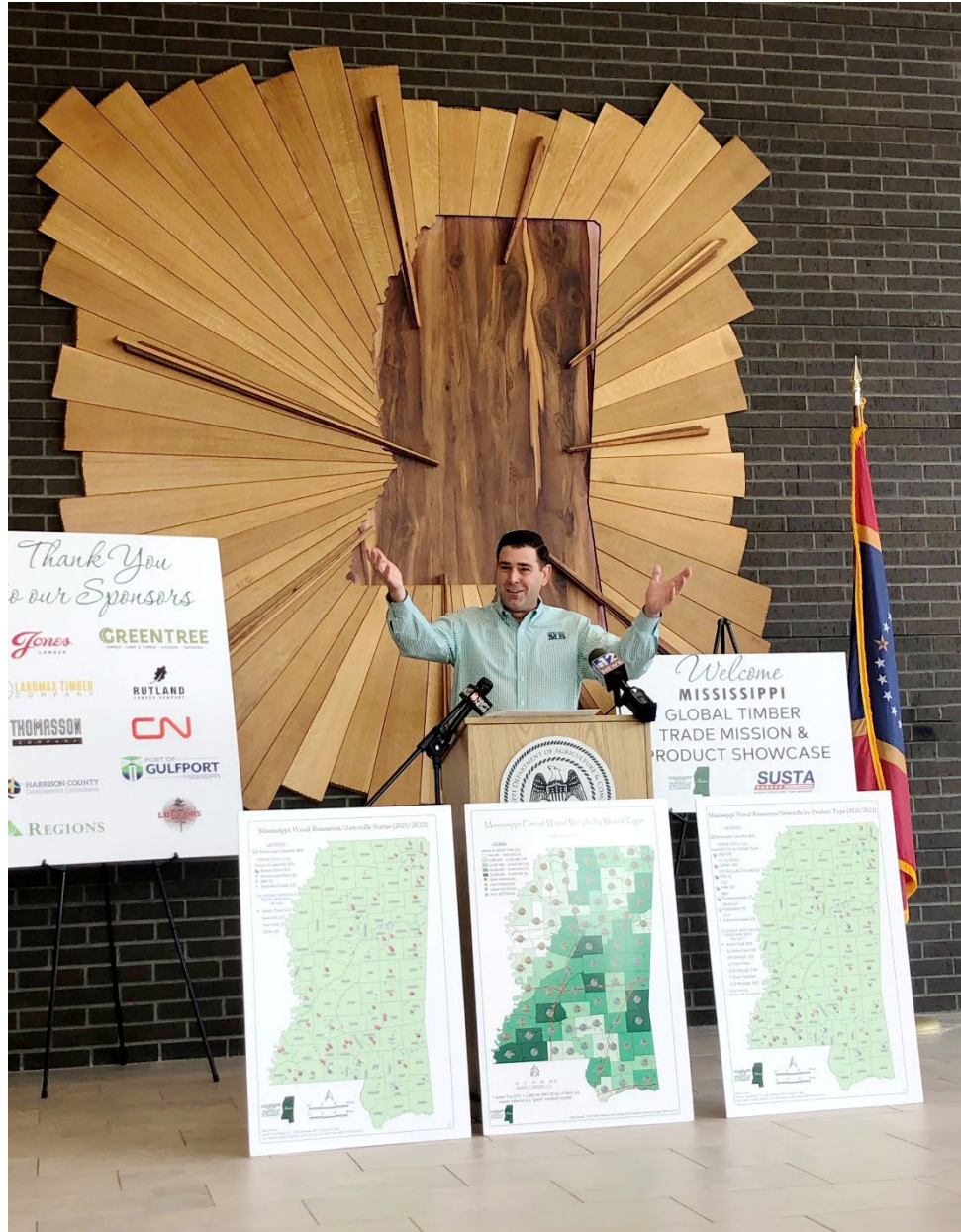
This week, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) and the Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) hosted timber buyers from the Dominican Republic, Mexico, United Kingdom, Spain and Vietnam. The international trade delegation toured several Mississippi timber companies, including the Jones Lumber Company in Natchez.

Pictured L-R: Susan Lawrence, MDAC's International Trade Specialist; Jose Ibanez, Buyer with Chapas Norte in Spain; Thao Thi Thanh, Consultant with Orissa International in Vietnam; Annette Huetink, Consultant with Phaff in Europe; Xochitl Herrera Gomez, Buyer with Ficamex in Mexico; Jesus Pimentel Fernandez, Buyer Madesol, S.A. in the Dominican Republic; Canh Thi Bich Le, Buyer with My Duc Co, LTD in Vietnam; Arnie Hogue, CEO of Jones Lumber Company in Natchez, MS; Ginger Williamson, Deputy Bureau Director of MDAC's Timber Commerce Division; Almudena Garcia Lopez, Buyer with Maderas Garcia Varona in Spain; Roberto Garcia Lopez, with Maderas Garcia Varona in Spain; Rupert Walker, Buyer with Timber Link International in the United Kingdom (UK); and Alicia Walker with Timber Link International in the UK.



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Pictured in Back L-R: Alicia Walker with Timber Link International in the United Kingdom (UK); Lloyd Chaplin, Buyer with Brooks Bros Ltd. in the UK; David Armenta, Consultant with Global BMT in the Caribbean; Lester De Moya, Buyer with Bosquesa, SRL in the Dominican Republic; Jose Rafael De Moya, Buyer with Bosquesa, SRL in the Dominican Republic; Ginger Williamson, Deputy Bureau Director of MDAC's Timber Commerce Division; Canh Thi Bich Le, Buyer with My Duc Co, LTD in Vietnam; Jesus Pimentel Fernandez, Buyer Madesol, S.A. in the Dominican Republic; Almudena Garcia Lopez, Buyer with Maderas Garcia Varona in Spain; Trang Thi Thu Phan, Buyer with An Lac Timber Co LTD. in Vietnam; Thao Thi Thanh, Consultant with Orissa International in Vietnam; Roberto Garcia Lopez, with Maderas Garcia Varona in Spain; Annette Huetink, Consultant with Phaff in Europe; and Thang Minh Duong, Buyer with An Lac Timber Co LTD. in Vietnam. Pictured in Front L-R: Xochitl Herrera Gomez, Buyer with Ficamex in Mexico; Rupert Walker, Buyer with Timber Link International in the UK; Jose Ibanez, Buyer with Chapas Norte in Spain; and Susan Lawrence, MDAC's International Trade Specialist.



Mississippi Agriculture and Commerce Commissioner Andy Gipson speaks at a reception addressing the visiting international trade delegation, leaders of the timber industry and representatives of various associated companies.