



**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](mailto:Paige@mdac.ms.gov)

**Hannah East, Marketing Specialist**  
**(601) 359-1179**  
[HannahE@mdac.ms.gov](mailto:HannahE@mdac.ms.gov)

## **Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson Announces New Agriculture and Conservation Partnerships**

**STATE FAIRGROUNDS, Miss.** – Today, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson announced three new partnerships involving the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) and youth, agricultural and conservation organizations.

“I am proud of the announcements made today involving agriculture and conservation. Farmers are the original conservationists, and no one cares more about the land and making sure that our habit is secure for wildlife than farmers. Today’s announcements are a testament to various groups and organizations from across Mississippi looking at the issues and figuring out how we can work together to tackle them,” said Commissioner Gipson.

Commissioner Gipson spotlighted a renewed partnership between the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) and the Mississippi FFA Association that was facilitated by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. As a result of the partnership, FFA will have the opportunity to utilize hundreds of acres along Pickwick Lake on Yellow Creek to benefit FFA members as was done nearly 50 years ago. The MDWFP and the FFA recently signed a 20-year agreement which will provide access and use of the lake-front property, with plans to improve the property as an outdoor recreation and agricultural education retreat for FFA members from across the state.

In addition, Commissioner Gipson announced the new Wild Hog Control Program (WHCP) Youth Trapping Corps. Created in 2020, MDAC’s Wild Hog Control Program provides “smart” wild hog traps to landowners and managers for the control of wild hogs on private agricultural and forestry lands in Mississippi. The Youth Trapping Corps is an expansion of WHCP and is designed to educate and professionally develop student members of agriculture-based organizations, such as FFA, on the impact of nuisance animals on agriculture and the importance of wild hog management.

The first-of-its-kind program will provide FFA students around the state the opportunity to offer wild hog trapping services while gaining valuable skills and work-based learning experiences. For this initiative,

Wildlife Dominion Management, LLC is partnering with MDAC and the Mississippi FFA Association to educate, train and provide technical support for the implementation of wild hog population control. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Wildlife Dominion Management, LLC and FFA to mark this innovative partnership.

“Youth are our future, and the new Wild Hog Control Program Youth Trapping Corps will allow FFA youth to gain knowledge about agriculture and wildlife management through hands-on work experience. Mississippi is leading the way with the Wild Hog Control Program Youth Trapping Corps, as it is the first program of its kind in the country,” said Commissioner Gipson.

Commissioner Gipson also recognized the Mississippi Pork Producers Association for their support of MDAC’s Wild Hog Control Program. The Mississippi Pork Board and the National Pork Board donated two panel trap systems that include traps, HogEye Camera Systems, solar power components and custom trailers. The donated trap systems will provide years of service to landowners and farmers through the WHCP to assist in protecting against the \$60 million worth of damage caused by wild hogs in Mississippi annually.

“I want to thank each of our partners - the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, FFA and the Mississippi Pork Producers Association. The partnerships outlined today take people from different organizations coming together to develop solutions for the problems we face,” said Commissioner Gipson.

Commissioner Gipson invited the public to attend the Mississippi Ag and Outdoor Expo, held today, August 5, through Sunday, August 7, at the Trade Mart. The state’s premier outdoor show, hosted by the Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks Foundation and presented by Southern AgCredit, includes all things hunting, fishing, agriculture-related and outdoor recreation. Joining the Expo will be the exciting Bulls, Bands and Barrels event, scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 6, at the Mississippi Coliseum. For more information, visit [www.mississippioutdoorexpo.com](http://www.mississippioutdoorexpo.com).

Visit [www.mdac.ms.gov/whcp](http://www.mdac.ms.gov/whcp) and [www.mdac.ms.gov/whcp-youth-trapping-corps](http://www.mdac.ms.gov/whcp-youth-trapping-corps) to learn more about MDAC’s Wild Hog Control Program and the Youth Trapping Corps. View <https://youtu.be/M0pnDqgVpJc> to watch the entire press conference.

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**Photos attached.**



**An MOU was signed by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Wildlife Dominion Management, LLC and the Mississippi FFA Association to mark the new partnership that will develop the Wild Hog Control Program Youth Trapping Corps. Pictured L-R: Jack Robertson, Co-owner of Wildlife Dominion Management, LLC; Andy Gipson, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce; Scott Breedlove, President of the Mississippi Association of Agriculture Educators; and (standing) Kade Bradshaw, FFA State Sentinel.**



**Today, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson announced new partnerships between the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce and youth, agricultural and conservation organizations. Pictured L-R: Sean Boe, President of the Mississippi Pork Producers Association; Robbie Taylor, Co-owner of Wildlife Dominion Management, LLC; Scott Breedlove, President of the Mississippi Association of Agriculture Educators; Lynn Posey, Acting Executive Director of Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; Andy Gipson, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce; Don Brazil, CEO of the Foundation for Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; and Jack Robertson, Co-owner of Wildlife Dominion Management, LLC.**



**Commissioner Gipson spotlighted a renewed partnership between the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) and the Mississippi FFA Association that was facilitated by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. Pictured L-R: Kade Bradshaw, FFA State Sentinel; Lynn Posey, Acting Executive Director of Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; Andy Gipson, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce; and Scott Breedlove, President of the Mississippi Association of Agriculture Educators.**



**Commissioner Gipson recognized and thanked the Mississippi Pork Producers Association for their support of MDAC's Wild Hog Control Program and donation of two panel trap systems. Pictured L-R: James Hogue, Mississippi Pork Producers Association; Bubba Vandevere, Mississippi Pork Producers Association; Andy Gipson, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce; Sean Boe, President of the Mississippi Pork Producers Association; and John Keenan, Mississippi Pork Producers Association.**