



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

ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 27, 2020**

**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)

### **Ag Commissioner Gipson Partners with U.S. Representative Trent Kelly in FARM Corps**

Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson announced that the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is partnering with U.S. Representative Trent Kelly in the FARM Corps program to assist Mississippi farmers facing labor shortages due to COVID-19.

Representative Kelly launched the Farm and Ranch Mission (FARM) Corps program in partnership with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation, Mississippi National Guard and Reserves, the Mississippi State University Extension Service, Mississippi Department of Veterans Affairs and other agricultural and veteran organizations. FARM Corps connects furloughed or unemployed members of the Guard, Reserve and Veterans from all service branches with local farmers and ranchers who are suffering labor shortages caused by COVID-19 and the lack of H-2A labor supply.

“I commend Congressman Kelly for launching the FARM Corps program in Mississippi which comes at a critical time for farmers as the growing season progresses. Without the proper workforce, our farmers can’t continue to operate. We look forward to working with all of the partners involved to address the labor shortage challenge. I encourage our farmers to take advantage of this tool and post their job openings on the FARM Corp website,” said Commissioner Gipson.

For this planting and harvesting season, the FARM Corps will address a critical need for Mississippi’s agricultural producers by providing skilled labor. Mississippi National Guardsmen and agricultural producers who are interested can visit the "[Mississippi Farm Corps](#)" Facebook page to learn more about this new program. More information about the FARM Corps can be found on the [Mississippi FARM Corps website](#). The website is ready to be used by agricultural producers to apply for employees, guardsmen to apply for work, and to locate a list of available jobs.

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic has caused strict travel restrictions at a time when America’s agricultural producers are both planting fall crops and harvesting summer crops. As a result, many farmers are experiencing large labor shortages in areas where they typically use foreign labor through the H-2A visa program.

The FARM Corps program originated in Arkansas as a collaboration between Arkansas Farm Bureau and U.S. Representative Rick Crawford.

###