



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

ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum Unveils New High Tunnel Exhibit During Annual Harvest Festival**

**JACKSON, Miss.** – Today, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson cut the ribbon to the new high tunnel exhibit at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum during the annual Harvest Festival. The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) partnered with the United States Agriculture Department's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to add this permanent exhibit to the Museum grounds.

Commissioner Gipson was joined by Kurt Readus, USDA-NRCS state conservationist; Hayes Patrick, executive director of the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum; as well as Jeff Wilson and Nicole Kitchens, project managers of the high tunnel exhibit.

“The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce has enjoyed a longstanding partnership with the USDA on multiple projects over the years, and we are proud to have worked alongside the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service in this endeavor,” said Commissioner Gipson. “The high tunnel exhibit is a unique addition to the Museum that visitors of all ages can appreciate and learn from.”

High tunnels are unheated greenhouses that can help individuals and commercial farmers improve profitability and productivity of their farms for all types of crops. The Museum's high tunnel is one of three newly constructed greenhouses in Jackson and is funded through the USDA's special grant initiative, NRCS. One was recently featured at the Mississippi State Fair and the other is located at the Mississippi Farmers Market on High Street.

“High tunnels allow agricultural producers to reduce the footprint, while protecting natural resources,” said Kurt Readus. “They also extend our farmers and landowners growing season, to increase their economic impact for their family and community. For information on High Tunnels, or any other programs and practices provided by NRCS, the public can contact their local service center.”

The annual Harvest Festival, hosted at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum, runs through Saturday, November 7, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The Museum, a division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, is located at 1150 Lakeland Drive in Jackson. For more information, call 601-432-4500 or 1-800-844-8687, visit [www.msagmuseum.org](http://www.msagmuseum.org) or visit the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum's page on Facebook.

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**Photos attached.**



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**Commissioner Andy Gipson and USDA-NCRS State Conservationist Kurt Readus plant rosemary in a raised bed at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum's high tunnel.**