



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Commissioner Gipson Encourages Producers to Continue to Apply for MASA Funds

JACKSON, Miss. – Today, Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson encouraged producers to continue to apply for Mississippi Agriculture Stabilization Act (“MASA”) Funds, which were first made available to producers on October 15, 2020, and he announced caps for funding awards.

Commissioner Gipson encouraged farmers to use this program to recoup COVID related expenses, “Whether you operate a poultry farm experiencing the loss of a flock over time, a qualifying CFAP farm recipient with uncovered COVID expenses, or a sweet potato farmer with uncovered storage costs, I encourage you to apply.” CFAP (Coronavirus Food Assistance Program) Qualified producers could receive as much as \$50,000, even if they have received USDA CFAP 1 and CFAP 2, or as much as \$100,000 if they were eligible for USDA CFAP but did not apply; \$25,000 for poultry; and \$20,000 for sweet potatoes.

MASA went into law on October 9, 2020, through Senate Bills 3058 and 3061, and provides roughly \$13 million to assist producers in Mississippi with CARES Act funds. This is a self-certified application program for assistance due to the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Mississippi agriculture producers, and has three separate funds within it: the Poultry Farmer Stabilization Grant Fund (\$3 million), the Sweet Potato Farm Sustainment Grant Program Fund (\$500,000), and the Mississippi Supplemental CFAP Grant Program Fund (\$9.5 million).

Allowable reimbursable COVID-related farm expenses include: costs to feed/care for livestock that would not have been spent but for COVID (e.g., cattle were not sold due to lack of demand, so extra feed was purchased by the farmer); costs associated with cancellations; additional supplies; additional hardware/software; project costs; training; overtime to cover for another employee in quarantine; PPE; and other expenses as noted on the program’s [web page](#).

Producers may apply at mscaresact.com and applications must be submitted online. If application requests exceed available funding, funds will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis. The deadline to apply is November 16, 2020, and the initial funding awards will be processed as early as next week.

Visit mdac.ms.gov/masa for more information about the Mississippi Agriculture Stabilization Act, program guidelines and applications. Questions regarding MASA can be submitted to Adam Choate at adam@mdac.ms.gov.

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