



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Commissioner Andy Gipson Announces Successful Payout of MASA Funds to Mississippi Agriculture Producers

JACKSON, Miss. – Today, Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson announced the successful payout of \$7,697,012 to Mississippi agriculture producers through funds provided by the Mississippi Agriculture Stabilization Act (MASA) under the CARES Act.

“I am proud to announce that the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce has been able to directly distribute over \$7.6 million to our agriculture producers across the state who have struggled during the pandemic this year,” said Commissioner Gipson. “I want to thank Governor Tate Reeves, Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann, House Speaker Philip Gunn, State Senate Agriculture Chairman Chuck Younger and House of Representatives Agriculture Chairman Bill Pigott for their work on this endeavor.”

MASA went into law on October 9, 2020, through Senate Bills 3058 and 3061, to aid producers in Mississippi. The self-certified application program for assistance due to the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic included three separate funds within it: the Poultry Farmer Stabilization Grant Fund, the Sweet Potato Farm Sustainment Grant Program Fund and the Mississippi Supplemental CFAP Grant Program Fund. MASA Funds reimbursed agricultural producers for expenses incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I am proud that our state was able to provide this assistance to our agricultural producers at a time when they needed it the most,” said Governor Reeves. “I commend Commissioner Gipson for his leadership in getting the funds dispersed to our farmers and ranchers in a timely manner.”

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce distributed 330 direct MASA fund payments to Mississippi farmers, ranchers and agriculture producers, exhausting all funds within two of the allotted grant programs. All unexpended funds were transferred to the Unemployment Compensation Fund.

“Our farmers are the lifeblood of Mississippi, and of much of the Nation. They were hit hard by the pandemic,” said Lt. Governor Hosemann. “The Agriculture Stabilization Act created and funded by the

Legislature gave hundreds of our farmers a boost of almost \$7.7 million during a very difficult time. We are grateful to the Department for administering and marketing this important program.”

“We realize this past year has been a trying time for all Mississippians, including our farmers,” said House Speaker Gunn. “I’m glad we were able to quickly pass this legislation out of the House and provide our state’s agricultural producers the help they needed through the Mississippi Agriculture Stabilization Act.”

For more information, visit www.mdac.ms.gov or follow the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce’s Facebook page for the latest agriculture news and updates.

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