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Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson Hosts Agriculture Technology Roundtable
JACKSON, Miss. – On May 18, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson hosted an
Agriculture Technology Roundtable discussion with farmers, university officials, legislators and industry
stakeholders at Mississippi State University’s (MSU) Delta Research and Extension Center (DREC) in
Stoneville.

“The future of agriculture, Mississippi’s top industry, is driven heavily by the introduction and adoptions
of new technologies,” said Commissioner Gipson. “This roundtable provided us the opportunity to bring
together various stakeholders to discuss the vital role technology plays in agriculture and its importance to
the industry and farmers’ bottom lines.”

Dr. Steve Martin, associate director of the MSU Extension Service and interim head of the Delta Research
and Extension Center, opened with a brief overview of DREC. Panelists included Pete Nelson, executive
director of AgLaunch in Memphis, Tenn., who discussed the AgLaunch’s efforts to grow ag tech startups
and build collaborative farmer networks across the surrounding region. Dee Boykin of the Southern Soil
& Plant Lab, LLC, in Yazoo City, discussed various agriculture technology practices used by farmers
including aerial imagery, drones and variable rate applications, as well as the challenges faced by farmers
with inadequate broadband access.

Dr. Alex Thomasson, department head of MSU’s Department of Agriculture and Biological Engineering,
discussed the importance of various technologies including precision ag, drones and robots, plant
phenomics, and traceability and block chain. Dr. Edmund Buckner, dean and director of Land Grant
Programs at Alcorn State University, gave an overview of the research that the university is conducting,
specifically in the area of specialty crops to increase yields and the global food supply. Division Director
and Bureau Manager Joe Donavon with the Mississippi Development Authority’s (MDA) Entrepreneur
Center presented MDA’s V-Quad program, an initiative that links together research universities, non-
profit organizations and government entities in Mississippi to develop systems to develop technologies
quickly.

“We heard real world examples of how farmers implemented technology to increase both yields and
efficiencies. That means more food is produced while increasing profits for farmers. I appreciate those
who were part of the important discussions during this busy time for our farmers. This roundtable was
just the beginning of many discussions to come regarding the importance of technology in agriculture and
its future role within the industry,” said Commissioner Gipson.

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Photo attached.
Commissioner Andy Gipson hosted an Agriculture Technology Roundtable discussion with farmers, university officials, legislators and industry stakeholders at Mississippi State University’s Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville to discuss the vital role that technology plays in agriculture.