



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Heartland Catfish Company Awarded Marketer of the Year by North American Agricultural Marketing Officials

ITTA BENA, Miss. – The North American Agricultural Marketing Officials (NAAMO) presented Mississippi-based Heartland Catfish Company with the Agricultural Marketer of the Year Award during its annual conference hosted by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

Founded in 1920, the North American Agricultural Marketing Officials is an international organization of the State and Provincial government agricultural marketing officials who provide both domestic and international marketing services to the agricultural and food industries in their states and provinces. Each year during the NAAMO Annual Conference, one entity in the state where the meeting is held is awarded the NAAMO Agricultural Marketer of the Year Award for continued innovation and advancement in the promotion of agricultural products.

Following a tour of the Tackett Catfish Farms and the Heartland Catfish Company, NAAMO board members joined Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson in presenting Heartland Catfish Company with the prestigious award. Jonathan Mills, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, and Ric Perkins, General Manager, accepted the award on behalf of the Heartland Catfish Company.

“We are proud to present the 2021 Marketer of the Year award to Heartland Catfish Company,” said Kerry Wefald, president of NAAMO. “This company has proven their commitment to furthering Mississippi’s agriculture industry and I commend their service and leadership within their state, and across the United States.”

Commissioner Gipson congratulated Heartland Catfish on receiving this distinct honor. “I congratulate Heartland Catfish for being selected as the NAAMO Agricultural Marketer of the Year. Heartland Catfish is a leader in the U.S. farm-raised catfish industry. We appreciate the opportunity to tour their farm and facilities, which gave us the chance to share a glimpse of the catfish industry with marketing officials from across the country.”

To learn more about the international NAAMO organization, visit www.naamo.org. For more information on the different activities, events and divisions offered by MDAC, visit www.mdac.ms.gov or follow the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce on Facebook.

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Photos attached.



NAAMO members attending the 2021 NAAMO Conference tour the catfish farm and processing facilities of Mississippi-based Heartland Catfish Company in Itta Bena.



Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson joined NAAMO board members in presenting representatives with Heartland Catfish Company the 2021 Marketer of the Year award and certificate. Pictured left to right: Ric Perkins, General Manager of Heartland Catfish Company; Rianne Perry, Treasurer of NAAMO representing the Washington Department of Agriculture; Tom Lipetzky, Member at Large representing the Colorado Department of Agriculture; Kerry Wefald, President of NAAMO representing the Kansas Department of Agriculture; Paige Manning, First Vice President of NAAMO representing the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce; Commissioner Gipson; and Jonathan Mills, VP of sales for Heartland Catfish Company.