



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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**Members of the Inaugural Mississippi Ag Youth Council Attend First Meeting in Jackson
Attala, Forrest, Hinds, Jackson, Lauderdale, Newton, Oktibbeha, Smith and Tippah Counties
Represented**

JACKSON, Miss. – Today, members of the inaugural 2021 Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council (MAYC) held their first meeting in Jackson. Council members were joined by Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson and representatives with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC).

“It was a pleasure to attend the Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council’s inaugural meeting,” said Commissioner Gipson. “As the future leaders of our communities, state and nation, it is so important to teach our young people the different elements and opportunities available within the ag industry. Mississippi is an agricultural state, with over 17% of the state’s workforce involved in its various operations. I was proud to preside over the lively discussion between these students regarding developing issues and perspectives found in agriculture, and I look forward to witnessing their growth.”

Comprised of 12 high school seniors with an interest in agriculture, the Mississippi Ag Youth Council was developed to provide industry exposure and experiential learning in a variety of agriculture fields. The youth leaders selected from around the state to serve on the council include Samuel Devin Granger of Attala County; Hannah Buse of Forrest County; Lila Murphy of Hinds County; Adaline Rouse of Jackson County; Max Hodgins of Lauderdale County; Regan Hand and Drew Wagner of Newton County; Samuel Matthews and Elizabeth Skelton of Oktibbeha County; Faith Sullivan and Delton Boone of Smith County; and Billie Chapman of Tippah County.

Today’s introductory meeting held at the Trade Mart on the Mississippi State Fairgrounds included a department overview and staff report by MDAC representatives, as well as an agriculture issues simulation. The MAYC then traveled to the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum for lunch and a roundtable discussion regarding current issues facing the agriculture industry with Commissioner Gipson. Council members also toured MDAC’s Genuine MS® member, Northshore Specialty Coffee, at the Hatch Business Incubator, to learn about entrepreneurship, agribusiness start-ups and marketing.

The MAYC will meet again in November at the MDAC headquarters located in Jackson. For more information about the Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council, visit www.mdac.ms.gov or contact Gayle Fortenberry at gayle@mdac.ms.gov or Emily Stovall at emilys@mdac.ms.gov.

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Photo attached.



Today, members of the inaugural 2021 Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council held their first meeting in Jackson. Council members were joined by Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson and representatives with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC). Pictured on back row (L-R): Jessica Everett, MDAC Intern; Emily Stovall, MDAC County Correspondent Representative; Hannah Buse of Forrest County; Dr. Hope Martin, MDAC Director of Meat Inspection; Samuel Matthews of Oktibbeha County; Drew Wagner of Newton County; Commissioner Gipson; Lila Murphy of Hinds County; Elizabeth Skelton of Oktibbeha County; Adaline Rouse of Jackson County; and Gayle Fortenberry, MDAC Director of Agriculture Workforce Education, Outreach and Development. Pictured on stairs in descending order (L-R): Delton Boone of Smith County; Billie Chapman of Tippah County; Samuel Devin Granger of Attala County; Regan Hand of Newton County; Max Hodgins of Lauderdale County; and Faith Sullivan of Smith County.