



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

CINDY HYDE-SMITH
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Ag Commissioner Hyde-Smith Announces New Farmers Market Grant Program

Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Cindy Hyde-Smith announced the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce will be taking applications for the new *Certified Farmers Market Specialty Crop Grant*. The goal of this grant program is to increase awareness and availability of Mississippi-grown specialty crops sold at Certified Farmers Markets.

A “Certified Farmers Market” means a place, structure or building that is used by two or more Mississippi growers on a frequent basis for the direct sale of their on-farm produce and/or food products to consumers. At least 50% of the agricultural products offered for sale must be produced by the grower or under the grower’s direction within the State of Mississippi. The market must be operated by a grower’s association; a certified, non-profit organization; or a government entity (state, county, municipal, tribal, etc.). To learn more about the Mississippi Certified Farmers Market program, visit www.mdac.ms.gov.

Through the *Certified Farmers Market Specialty Crop Grant*, Certified Farmers Markets can apply for up to \$1,000 to promote specialty crops sold at their respective farmers market. Grant funds may only be used for specialty crop promotion. Specialty crops are defined by law as “fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture.”

This program is on a first come, first serve basis. Only one grant can be awarded per market.

The *Certified Farmers Market Specialty Crop Grant* is funded through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program through the United States Department of Agriculture. For additional information, visit the Alerts and Announcements section at www.mdac.ms.gov or contact Susan Head at (601) 359-1196 or susan@mdac.ms.gov.

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About the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce

Under the leadership of Commissioner Cindy Hyde-Smith, the mission of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is to protect and promote agricultural-related businesses within the state and to promote Mississippi's products throughout both the state and the rest of the world for the benefit of all Mississippi citizens. This is accomplished through many bureaus and departments within the agency including the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum, Mississippi Farmers Market, Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau, Bureau of Plant Industry, Market Development Division and Bureau of Regulatory Services. To learn more about MDAC, visit www.mdac.ms.gov.