



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

ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For July 3, 2019**

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### **Commissioner Gipson Hosts Newly Launched Genuine MS Summer Series Podcast**

Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson is the host of the newly launched podcast to promote the state's agricultural branding program, Genuine MS.

Gipson kicked off the Genuine MS podcast series with an introductory episode featuring special guests Paige Manning, Market Development Director at the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, and Don van de Werken, a tea grower from Pearl River Tea Company in Poplarville. Gipson and van de Werken discuss tea production, an agricultural crop that many are not aware is grown in Mississippi, and provide insights into the Mississippi blueberry industry.

"I am very excited to host the new Genuine MS podcast," Gipson stated. "The podcast gives us the opportunity to spotlight some of talented farmers and entrepreneurs who are providing the state and the globe with products grown, raised, crafted, and made right here in our state, and it allows us to showcase how they are contributing to our state's economy. We want everyone in Mississippi, both producers and consumers, to benefit from the advantages of the Genuine MS program. This podcast helps to accomplish this."

In a relaxed, conversational format, each podcast episode will feature Genuine MS farmers, ranchers, crafters, and manufacturers as they tell the stories behind their farms, businesses, and the unique products they offer. The podcast can be conveniently accessed on the Genuine MS website ([GenuineMS.com/podcast](http://GenuineMS.com/podcast)), Stitcher and iTunes. Episodes will be updated weekly throughout the summer.

Genuine MS was developed by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce to identify and promote products proudly created or produced by Mississippi farmers, artisans, entrepreneurs and manufacturers. The purpose of the Genuine MS program is to increase public awareness of Mississippi's farm, food, crafted and fabricated products by branding them as Genuine MS. The website, [GenuineMS.com](http://GenuineMS.com), serves as a centralized location featuring members' products, while connecting consumers across the globe with the people and places that grow, raise, craft and make Genuine MS products.

For more information, visit [GenuineMS.com](http://GenuineMS.com) or contact the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce's Market Development Division at (601) 359-1159 or [Info@GenuineMS.com](mailto:Info@GenuineMS.com). Follow Genuine MS on Facebook and Instagram at [@GenMississippi](https://www.facebook.com/GenMississippi) or on Twitter at [@GenMississippi](https://twitter.com/GenMississippi).

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