PRESS RELEASE
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Mississippi Hemp Cultivation Task Force Holds First Meeting

JACKSON, Miss. — The Mississippi Hemp Cultivation Task Force convened today at the State Capitol. The Task Force, chaired by Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson, was established by the Mississippi Legislature to consider the potential of hemp cultivation, market potential, and potential job creation in Mississippi.

The Task Force and members of the public heard presentations on various topics regarding hemp including the regulation and cultivation of hemp, the University of Mississippi Cannabis Research Program, and law enforcement concerns related to hemp. Task Force members formed four committees as they move forward in focusing on various areas of hemp production: Regulations and Monitoring; Economics, Marketing, and Job Creation; Hemp Agronomy; and Law Enforcement Concerns. Each committee will report their findings at the next scheduled meeting.

“Today was the beginning of many thoughtful, evidence-based discussions that the members of the Task Force will be having as we examine all the issues surrounding the cultivation of hemp in Mississippi. We will be thoroughly exploring both the opportunities and the challenges of producing hemp in the state,” said Commissioner Gipson. “In all our considerations, we will keep a keen focus on the interests of Mississippians, including our farmers, law enforcement and other stakeholders, as well as the general public.”

The Mississippi Hemp Cultivation Task Force was created by House Bill 1547 enacted during the 2019 Regular Legislative Session. Members of the Task Force are as follows:

Andy Gipson, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce
Wes Burger, Mississippi State University
Edmund Bucker, Alcorn State University
Larry Walker, University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy National Center for Natural Products Research
Paul Dees, Delta Council
Brittany Ridinger, Mississippi Secretary of State’s Office
Mike Lanford, Mississippi Attorney General’s Office
Meg Pearson, Mississippi State Department of Health
The meeting was available for viewing through livestreaming on the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce’s Facebook page. A recorded video from the meeting along with presentations will be made available at https://www.mdac.ms.gov/hemp-cultivation-task-force/ in the coming days. The public can submit comments by emailing MSHempTaskForce@mdac.ms.gov.

The next meeting date of the Mississippi Hemp Cultivation Task Force will be September 25, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 113 of the Mississippi State Capitol.