



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

ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

# **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson Statement on “Meat” and “Meat Food Product” Labeling Law and Proposed Rules**

Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson issued the following statement regarding the ongoing rule making process involving Mississippi’s “meat” and “meat food product” labeling law and proposed rules:

“We are continuing our rule making process to enforce Mississippi’s law prohibiting plant-based, insect-based, or lab grown cell cultures from being labeled as ‘meat’ or a ‘meat food product.’ Since July, we’ve received comments and worked with interested parties to tighten up our original proposed rules. We’re pleased with these proposed rules, and once they are finalized, the Department will act to enforce the law and rules.”

“The law is constitutional and has not changed. The definitions of ‘meat’ and ‘meat food product’ have not changed. And our proposed rules continue to require these products have appropriate qualifiers. If we find potentially false or misleading products, we have the authority to investigate and act; and we will. Our proposed rules support the law and make it clear these products cannot be false or misleading and cannot be labeled as meat or as a meat food product, but must use the qualifiers set out in the regulations.”

“In July, when the State of Mississippi was sued over our law, I said it was unfortunate the plaintiffs resorted to litigation without reviewing our proposed rules, or offering comments to those proposed rules. Since that time, the plaintiffs and other parties have come to our table to offer comments and work through the routine rule making process. Contrary to what the plaintiffs have been saying, ‘veggie burgers’ have never been outlawed by the Mississippi law or proposed rules. I think the plaintiffs finally figured that out. There was no need for a federal lawsuit; the law is constitutional; and it is my understanding the plaintiffs plan to dismiss their own lawsuit against the law once the rules are finalized. It’s a shame the plaintiffs chose to waste taxpayer resources with a lawsuit rather than working through the normal public rule making process.”

“As from the beginning, we are going to enforce this constitutional law with common sense regulations to make sure Mississippi consumers know whether or not they are buying real meat.”

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