



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson Announces Organic Certification Cost-Share Program

JACKSON, Miss. — Commissioner Andy Gipson announced that the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) is currently offering a cost-share program for Mississippi organic producers and handlers receiving certification or continuation of certification by a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) accredited certifying agent.

“I encourage our farmers that have received USDA’s Organic Certification in the past year to take advantage of this cost-share program, if they have not already. This program provides an opportunity for our farmers to help offset the costs of obtaining the certification,” said Commissioner Gipson.

Funding is available for those that received the certification between October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019. Individual organic operators are eligible for reimbursement of 75 percent of their fiscal year 2019 certification costs up to a maximum of \$750 per category of certification. The National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program currently recognizes four categories of certification eligible for reimbursement: crops, wild crops, livestock, and handler.

To be eligible for reimbursement, the following must be provided to MDAC by applicants: proof of certification issued by a USDA accredited certifying agent, a reimbursement form, an itemized invoice for certification-related expenses, an IRS W-9 form, and documentation of the payment in the form of a cancelled check. You must be a Mississippi organic producer and handler located within the State of Mississippi. Funds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis until the funds are depleted. Operations may receive one reimbursement per year.

For more information about this program or to obtain an application, visit <http://www.mdac.ms.gov/departments/marketing/organic.htm> or contact Michael Lasseter at michaelL@mdac.ms.gov or (601) 359-1120.

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