



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 4, 2020

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- Who:** Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson
- What:** Press Conference to Kick-Off the Annual Sale of Junior Champions
- When:** Thursday, February 6, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.
Press Conference takes place prior to the Sale of Junior Champions which begins at 11:30 a.m.
- Where:** Mississippi Trade Mart on the Mississippi State Fairgrounds
East Meeting Room
- Note:** Champion and Reserve Champion youth participants will be available for interview following the press conference at the Sale of Champions.

Ag Commissioner Gipson to Hold Press Conference to Kick-Off the 2020 Dixie National Sale of Junior Champions

The media is invited to attend as Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson kicks off the 51st annual Dixie National Sale of Junior Champions with a press conference on Thursday, February 6, at 11:00 a.m. at the Mississippi Trade Mart. The Sale will begin at 11:30 a.m. in the Trade Mart. Commissioner Gipson will be joined by Dr. Reuben Moore, Interim Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry, and Vet-Med with Mississippi State University Extension Service; Jill Wagner, Program Supervisor of Mississippi Agricultural Education & FFA program; and Ted Kendall IV, Chairman of the Sale of Junior Champions Promotion Committee.

The Dixie National Sale of Junior Champions is one of the highlight events of the Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo. In 2019, 1,635 4-H and FFA members from across Mississippi participated in the Dixie National Junior Round-Up Livestock Show showing 2,263 head of various livestock including pigs, sheep, cattle, and goats. The Junior Round-Up participants winning Champion and Reserve Champion for their market animals have the opportunity to sell their livestock at the Sale of Junior Champions auction. Last year, the sale of 45 animals grossed \$382,775, setting a new sales record, and thirty-seven scholarships totaling \$58,000 was awarded. Over the past 50 years, the sale has grossed over \$7.2 million. Since the first scholarships were given in 1993, over 683 scholarships have been awarded to various 4-H and FFA members totaling \$891,200.

This sale promotes both 4-H and FFA livestock programs in Mississippi as well as other economic, educational and personal development opportunities for the youth in state. The Sale of Junior Champions helps students earn money for college, as well as helps them to develop a wide host of skills. The youth participating in the livestock show spend months raising and caring for their livestock teaching them the value of hard work and responsibility.

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