



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 19, 2020

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Ag Commissioner Gipson Provides Update on MDAC Functions

JACKSON, Miss. – Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson provided an update on the functions of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) during this COVID-19 emergency.

Commissioner Gipson assures the public that essential functions of the department continue without disruption in order to support farmers and ensure the flow of commerce with no interruptions of supplies. While MDAC office buildings are closed to the public, many employees are working from home, or they are at home on administrative leave.

“Our work continues. We’re returning phone calls and emails. We’re responding to consumer complaints and questions,” said Commissioner Gipson. “A crisis can sharpen your focus. When the crisis is over, my plan is for this department to perform our services even better than before.”

In response to COVID-19, the Commissioner announced the establishment of a task force within the agency to work on immediate issues relating to the emergency that impact farmers and industry. “I have created a COVID-19 Taskforce to look at ways we can work with all those we serve and regulate to ensure commerce continues while protecting public health. Members of that Taskforce are already working with farmers and industry to find creative ways keep commerce moving while still abiding by state and federal laws,” said Commissioner Gipson.

Routine functions of the Department that are critical to food safety and the food supply chain are ongoing including inspections at meat processing plants. The department is continuing to test seeds as well as test and certify private pesticide applicators so that this emergency does not prevent crop production.

He reminds the public that the Mississippi Farmers Market on located on High Street will be open this Saturday, March 21, from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. where shoppers will find locally grown produce, eggs, milk, meat and honey, among other products.

Commissioner Gipson encourages the public to continue reporting any complaints by calling 601-359-1100 if they encounter any problems that needs to be investigated.

Click <https://youtu.be/2OjdakqzTc> to view Commissioner Gipson’s message to the public.

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