



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

LESTER SPELL, JR., D.V.M.  
COMMISSIONER

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**For Immediate Release**

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**Quality Seed: An Important Issue for Soybeans in 2008**

Lester Spell, Mississippi's Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce, announced that the early results of soybean seed tested at the State Seed Testing Laboratory have shown levels of low germination and lack of consistency in seed quality.

As Mississippi agriculture braces for another large grain production year in 2008, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) urges all Mississippi farmers to pay close attention to labeling and certification on each bag of seed they purchase before planting. The demand for soybean and corn seed has increased significantly in the past two years, forcing some producers to settle with unfamiliar varieties they may not have used in the past. Currently, early testing reports have indicated some soybean varieties are showing low germination percentages, and other varieties are showing poor results of consistency in seed quality that could lead to lower yields.

Thus far, the germination for soybeans has averaged 76% compared to the normal industry minimum of 80% tagged on most soybean varieties. "The low germination levels are due in part to dry harvest conditions when the seed was collected last year. I recommend that all soybean farmers send a seed sample to the State Seed Testing Lab to compare the tested germination results and the germination quality stated on each seed container or bag of seed from the company. Furthermore, producers should request copies of records on their purchased seed from their seed dealer," said Spell.

The State Seed Testing Laboratory, operated by MDAC's Bureau of Plant Industry, conducts an array of tests on all seed sold within the state to insure proper germination and consistency in seed quality for Mississippi farmers. For more information, please contact Fabian Watts, MDAC State Seed Testing Laboratory Director, at (662) 325- 7707.

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