



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

CINDY HYDE-SMITH  
COMMISSIONER

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
May 12, 2014**

### **Invitation Open for Public Comment on Mississippi Farm to School**

The Mississippi Farm to School Interagency Council is inviting public comment on proposed objectives of the Council and the promotion of farm to school programs in Mississippi in general. The public comment period will end on June 16, 2014, at 11:59 p.m.

The Interagency Farm to School Council was created by the Mississippi Legislature in 2013 to identify models and methods of promoting farm to school programs in the state in order to improve the availability of healthy, fresh foods in schools and to promote the economic development of Mississippi farmers and food producers. "Farm to school program" means any commercial relationship where a school purchases locally grown or locally raised agricultural products to serve in school meals and can include educational programs for students on local agriculture and nutrition.

The Interagency Farm to School Council is composed of representatives from of the Mississippi Department of Education, Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Mississippi State Department of Health, Mississippi State University Extension Service, Alcorn State University Extension Service, Mississippi Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, Mississippi Poultry Association, and Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation.

The Council is charged with facilitating the creation and growth of farm to school programs in communities throughout the State of Mississippi through studying, recommending, and administering best practices for creating farm to school programs. The Interagency Council will report to specific legislative committees prior to the ending of the calendar year. The report will include recommendations to promote farm to school throughout the state.

The Interagency Farm to School Council has identified four objectives:

- 1) To cultivate and locate farmers to sell Mississippi products within the DoD Farm to School Program.
- 2) To cultivate and locate farmers to sell to individual school systems outside of the DoD Program.
- 3) To cultivate food nutrition directors to purchase Mississippi products from Mississippi farmers and create a connection between farmers and schools.
- 4) To cultivate a state cooperation at the legislature.

Comments can be submitted via:

Electronically: [www.mdac.ms.gov/farmtoschool](http://www.mdac.ms.gov/farmtoschool)  
Email: [paige@mdac.ms.gov](mailto:paige@mdac.ms.gov)  
Mail: Paige Manning, Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce  
P.O. Box 1609 Jackson, MS 39215  
Hand Delivery: Paige Manning, Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce  
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For more information regarding the Interagency Farm to School Council or the invitation for public comments, please contact Paige Manning, Chairman, Interagency Farm to School Council, at (601) 359-1163 or [paige@mdac.ms.gov](mailto:paige@mdac.ms.gov).

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