

PLANT INDUSTRY NEWS

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MS DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE - CINDY HYDE-SMITH, COMMISSIONER - JOHN G. CAMPBELL, DIRECTOR

Monitoring Program Shows Continuing Record of Safety in Mississippi Farm-Raised Catfish

By James Dale

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Bureau of Plant Industry has worked closely with the state's catfish industry and the Mississippi State Chemical Laboratory

(MSCL) for more than 15 years to monitor farm-raised catfish for pesticide residues.

The industry has been accumulating information to ensure that Mississippi farm-raised catfish are free of pesticide residues and safe to eat. Fillet samples collected from catfish pro-

cessors by Bureau inspectors are analyzed by the MSCL for trace levels of agricultural pesticides, particularly those prevalently used on cotton, soybeans, corn, and rice.

Fillet samples are analyzed for a total of 29

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Building a Better Drainage Ditch Through REACH

By Dr. Robbie Kröger,
Mississippi State University

Agriculture drainage and environmental conservation are not mutually exclusive. Through innovative best management practices, REACH (Research and Education to Advance Conservation and Habitat) is enabling farmers to increase drainage, while at the same time, limiting water pollution created by runoff of nitrogen and phosphate fertilizers. Farmers are great stewards of their land and are looking for trusted and proven information to help them be better stewards and better farmers. One way in

REACH, *continued on page 2*



Catfish Monitoring, *continued from front page*

compounds. These compounds are the chemical contaminants that might reasonably be expected to have some chance to appear in fish. The sampling program is designed to assess the overall condition of the catfish industry and should effectively identify industry-wide contamination

problems.

This beneficial service is being provided to the catfish industry at no cost, and there have been no pesticide contamination problems found in the fish since the program began.

Contact James Dale at (662) 325-7773 for

additional information regarding the catfish monitoring program.

James Dale is Branch Director, Plant Pest and Pesticide Divisions.

Email: JamesD@mdac.ms.gov

REACH, *continued from front page*



The REACH program provides information and demonstration of best management practices, such as the construction of weirs, to illustrate the relationship between conservation and profitable agriculture.

which farmers are doing their part to protect water resources is through the use of low-grade weirs, a best management practice which can be placed in any ditch for a comparatively low cost.

Weirs are small impoundments placed within drainage ditches at strategic intervals, dependent on the slope and length of a ditch channel. Weir installation begins with two modifications to the ditch. First, the ditch is widened, and then the slopes are tailed back. After these modifications, weirs are installed. Weirs are constructed by placing an earthen berm within the ditch. The berm is covered first with engineered woven fabric for stabilization and then with a layer of rip-rap. Both of these modifications can be cost-shared through the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service. The beauty about these new drainage systems is that they provide better drainage for

the farmer, which means reducing the potential of flooding, decrease the amount of ditch maintenance required, as ditch banks are more stable, and have the potential of being used to hold surface water on the landscape for later use.

The link between upstream agricultural runoff and water quality in the Gulf of Mexico is well known. Better ditches are better for agriculture and better for the environment. Weirs slow and hold water running through the ditch which encourages wetland vegetation to grow. This also allows sediments to settle out and natural processes to reduce water-quality impairing concentrations of nitrogen and phosphate in runoff to safer levels. Weirs are one way in which Mississippi growers are making a difference upstream to protect down-

stream water resources.

The REACH program is helping farmers across the state of Mississippi, regardless of commodity, to change perceptions around agriculture. REACH provides information on the effectiveness of management practices and works together with individual farmers to showcase how conservation and profitable agriculture go hand in hand through on-farm demonstration and a growing network of farmers and land managers. REACH is a collaborative program between 30 different state, federal, and non-governmental organizations that provides a service to farmers across the state to address a resource need.

Contact Dr. Robbie Kröger at (662) 325-4731, or rkroger@cfr.msstate.edu, for additional information regarding the REACH program.

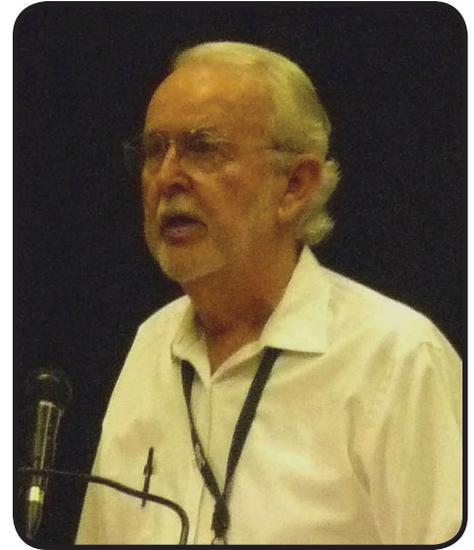
Photos Courtesy of REACH.

MAIC Celebrates Mississippi's Leading Industry at 2013 Annual Convention

By Stacey Swain

The Mississippi Agriculture Industry Council (MAIC) has been bringing members of the agriculture community and its supporters together for more than five decades in celebration of Mississippi's leading industry. At the 53rd Annual MAIC Convention, the council was host to a large gathering of over 500 council members and invited guests in Orange Beach, Alabama, July 23-27, 2013. Held annually in conjunction with the Mississippi Seedsmen's Association (MSA), the convention offers educational sessions, roundtable discussions, training opportunities, and networking events where relationships are developed and ideas are shared in an effort to support and promote growth of the agriculture industry.

Special guests addressed various issues impacting the future of agriculture in Mississippi, such as the latest research and technology, upcoming regulatory changes, and efforts to improve
MAIC Annual Convention, continued on page 6



Commissioner Cindy Hyde-Smith (left) and Senator Billy Hudson (right) were among special guest speakers at the MAIC Annual Convention held in Orange Beach, Alabama, July 23-27, 2013.

Save the date...



OCTOBER 10-11, 2013

39th Annual Meeting

Mississippi Agricultural Economics Association

Mississippi State University

Thursday, October 10 — Golf & Social

Friday, October 11 — Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 12 — CALS Breakfast & Game (Bowling Green)

Hotel Block under MAEA at the Comfort Suites, Starkville, MS (Deadline 10/3/13)

Registration details at <http://www.ageecon.msstate.edu/>



Department of Agricultural Economics
P. O. Box 5187
Mississippi State, MS 39762
Phone: 662-325-2730; Fax: 662-325-6777
E-mail: myer@ageecon.msstate.edu



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MISSISSIPPI FARMERS MARKET

The Mississippi Farmers Market is currently open Thursdays and Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Country Comes to Town in
Downtown Jackson
Off High Street

For more information,
visit www.mdac.ms.gov.



MISSISSIPPI FARMERS MARKET

Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Lester Spell, Jr., DVM, Commissioner

Seed Lab Reports High Quality in Wheat

By Fabian Watts

Despite a cool, wet spring, wheat yields and quality remained strong in Mississippi this year. The lower temperatures and prolonged wet conditions led to some initial concerns about how frost and disease might negatively affect the wheat harvest. However, reports have indicated these factors failed to have a significant effect on yields or quality, with high numbers of good, quality wheat being harvested. As fall planting begins, farmers will welcome news from the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Seed Testing Laboratory that is finding high quality in wheat after extensive testing this summer.

To date, the Seed Lab has tested over 460 samples of wheat. Out of those samples tested, 93 percent have germinated at 90 percent or better, leaving only six percent that have germi-

nated at 80 percent or more and one percent that have germinated at less than 80 percent. These results show excellent quality in wheat overall, with only a small percentage of lower quality wheat, which is believed to be partly due to carryover.

The majority of these samples have been certified samples. Farmers can identify certified seed by the certification tag, which indicates the seed meets certification standards, was properly rotated in the field, handled with inspected and approved equipment, and laboratory tested.

When planting wheat this fall, remember to check the seed label for important information such as the variety name, germination percentage, germination test date, purity, source of the seed guarantee, and lot number of the seed. This information provides an indication

of the seed's germination and crop stand potential, as well as a way to trace the seed back to the processor and grower of the seed if any problems arise.

Farmers also have the option to test a representative sample of seed for germination before planting to ensure the quality of the seed has been maintained. Labels and a sample of each lot of seed planted should be kept as a part of thorough recordkeeping of all farming practices, including planting dates and fields according to seed lot.

Contact Fabian Watts at (662) 325-7707 for additional information regarding seed quality and testing.

Fabian Watts is Director, Seed Testing Laboratory.
Email: Fabian@mdac.ms.gov

Common Misconception About Termite Control Contracts Explained

By Russell Kohler

After entering into an agreement with a pest control operator, homeowners sometimes become confused by the terms of wood destroying insect control contracts. Most are under the assumption that pest control companies are required to issue a contract providing for the repair or replacement of any damage. Any pest control operator who holds a license to perform wood destroying insect control must enter into a written contract with the person employing him. However, the contract must clearly state in bold letters on the face of the contract if damage repairs are included.

On the face of the contract, there should be a statement indicating one of the following conditions:

- **this contract provides for the repair or replacement of damage, or**
- **this contract provides for retreatment only.**

Pest control operators will retreat a structure if there is an "active" infestation present, and a remedial treatment will be provided at no additional cost to the structure. Always be sure to check with the company about the timeframe required to schedule a retreatment if this occurs.

If a wood destroying insect control contract is labeled as "provides for the repair or replacement of damage," pay close attention to the terms of the contract. Each pest control company has different language describing the conditions that must be present in order to warrant the repair or replacement of any damage.

Contact Russell Kohler at (662) 325-7766 for additional information regarding contracts for wood destroying insect control.

Russell Kohler is Branch Director, Pesticide Division.
Email: RussellK@mdac.ms.gov

PERSONNEL NEWS

Megan Bullard joined the Bureau of Plant Industry on June 17, 2013, as an administrative assistant in the aerial applicator licensing program. A native of Olive Branch, Mississippi, Megan attended Mississippi State University (MSU), receiving a bachelors degree in animal science. She continued her education at the University of Southern Mississippi, where she received a masters of public health in epidemiology and biostatistics. Prior to joining the Bureau, Megan held positions in veterinary medicine and with MSU's Social Science Research Center and Dairy Research Center.

Workshop Introduces Choctaw County Youth to Entomology

By Jenny Bibb

On June 22, 2013, an entomology workshop was conducted by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Bureau of Plant Industry and the Mississippi State University Entomology Club with Choctaw County youth, ages 8-12. There were a total of 11 boys and girls that attended the Saturday morning workshop. The youth learned how to identify insects and some of

the basic taxonomic insect orders that can be found here in Mississippi. They learned how to look at insects under the microscope and were taught how to collect and pin insects for insect collections. Various collections of Mississippi insect collections were also available for them to view.

The goal of this workshop was to teach the children that insects are not “nasty and gross” but actually fascinating creatures, as well as to

help get them interested in 4H entomology contests.

If anyone would like us to conduct this workshop again for your 4H club, FFA club, classroom, etc., contact Jenny Bibb at (662) 325-7763. *Photos by Stacey Swain.*

Jenny Bibb is Branch Director,
Plant Pest Division.
Email: Jennyb@mdac.ms.gov



Future Entomologists of Choctaw County with Jenny Bibb (far left) and Janet Hughes of the Choctaw County Extension Office (far right, back)



Taking a Closer Look at a Cockroach Under the Microscope



Moving the Classroom Outdoors to Collect Insects



Learning how insects use pheromones to find mates, the children put their noses to the test to help them find their mate with the same smell.

Lending a Helping Hand with the United Way



Megan Bullard (right) represented the Bureau of Plant Industry at The United Way of the Capital Area's Day of Action on August 24, 2013. Shown here with Jay Hogue of Wade Incorporated (left), Megan pulled weeds, landscaped yards, and painted at the Christians in Action Center in Jackson. *Photo courtesy of The United Way of the Capital Area.*

MSU Extension Service Launches Directory App

A new app from the Mississippi State University Extension Service connects the expertise of more than 150 county agents to clients wherever they are. The Mississippi Extension Service Directory is a free app available for Apple products, including the iPhone, iPad and iPod, through the app store. Users can search the directory by county, region, and agent's name. Clients can launch an in-app phone call or view a map to the county office. "The MSU Extension Service has agents serving Mississippians in every county in the state, and now it's easier than ever to find them," said Randy Loper, head of the Extension Center for Technology Outreach. "The MSU Extension Service Directory app puts names, phone numbers, and maps to the county offices at your fingertips." To download the app, go to the app store and search for "MSUES," "Mississippi State Extension Service," or "Extension Service," or visit <http://tinyurl.com/mawdgvb>.

MAIC Annual Convention, *continued from page 3*

education and outreach, as well as the importance of facing these and other challenges with unity. In her remarks to the council and guests, Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce Commissioner Cindy Hyde-Smith applauded the group for the critical job they do in a time when the need for safe, affordable food has never been greater.

"There is nothing more important than what farmers do," stated Commissioner Hyde-Smith, who described food as the common denominator that binds us all.

Her encouragement to continue working together to promote agriculture and spread awareness of the great opportunities the industry can offer to future generations was a common message throughout the convention.

Other speakers included Ward Bloodworth, President, MAIC; Bert Mann, President, MSA;

Senator Billy Hudson, Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman; Joe Mac Hudspeth, Wildlife Photographer; Dr. Bill Herndon, Associate Vice President, Mississippi State University (MSU) Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine; Ray Brinkmeyer, Global Regulatory Manager, Dow AgroSciences; and Don Parker, Pest Management Manager, National Cotton Council.

The 2013 recipients of the MAIC Robert H. McCarty Endowed Scholarship were also recognized at the convention. MSU students Brian Adams and Ben Lawrence of Starkville, Mississippi, Rebecca Hilderbrand, of Benton, Mississippi, and Kaila Roberson of Leland, Mississippi, will each receive a \$1,000.00 scholarship to further their educations as recipients of the award. Brian is a graduate student studying entomology, Ben is a graduate student

studying weed science, Rebecca is a sophomore studying animal and dairy science, and Kaila is a junior studying agribusiness. The scholarship is awarded to deserving MSU students annually in honor of Robert H. McCarty's 33 years of dedicated service to agriculture in Mississippi.

MAIC is a chartered, non-profit educational corporation dedicated to strengthening the agriculture industry through timely seminars, workshops, legislative efforts, and academic scholarships.

Contact Butch Alpe at (662) 325-1269 for additional information regarding the activities of MAIC.

Photos by Stacey Swain.

Stacey Swain is Communication and Policy Advisor.
Email: Stacey@mdac.ms.gov

**35th
Annual**



*Healthy Living –
Healthy Gardening*

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Friday and Saturday October 18–19, 2013

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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Crystal Springs, Mississippi

Featuring:

- HUGE Plant Sale
- 3-Acre Vegetable, Flower, and Herb Garden
- Garden Seminars
- Banana Trial Garden
- Ornamental Grasses
- Wagon Ride Tours and Walking Tours
- Pond Management
- Specialty Crops
- Shade Garden
- Beekeeping
- Hummingbird Garden
- Climbing Vegetables and Flowers
- Composting Center
- Butterfly Garden
- All-America Selections Winners
- Mississippi Medallion Winners
- Master Gardener Programs
- Plant Swap
- The “Corn Meal Man”
- Backyard Wildlife Habitat
- Food Vendors
- Handicapped Accessible
- Scarecrows

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your County Extension Office.**



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BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY

P.O. Box 5207
Mississippi State, MS 39762
Phone: (662) 325-3390
Fax: (662) 325-8397

ADMINISTRATION

Cindy Hyde-Smith
Commissioner

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MI0023 (3M-08-13)

Applicator Certifications, License Renewals, and Agricultural Events

Agricultural Meetings, Field Days, and Events

September 28: Fall Garden Tour, North Mississippi Research and Extension Center, Verona, (662) 456-4269 or (662) 328-2111

October 2-13: 2013 Mississippi State Fair, Fairgrounds, Jackson, (601) 961-4000

October 10: Ornamental Horticulture Field Day, South Mississippi Branch Station, Poplarville, (601) 403-8774

October 18-19: Fall Flower and Garden Fest, Truck Crops Branch Experiment Station, Crystal Springs, (601) 892-3731

October 21-26: 2013 Southern Cutting Horse Futurity, Kirk Fordice Equine Center, Fairgrounds, Jackson, (601) 654-9271

October 25: Southeast Mississippi Forage Field Day, Simmons Farm, Petal, (662) 325-7718

November 1: Northwest Mississippi Forage

Field Day, Gordon Farms, Batesville, (662) 325-7718

November 5-9: Harvest Festival, Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum, Jackson, (601) 432-4500

November 15: Mississippi Forage and Grassland Conference, Multipurpose Center, Hattiesburg, (662) 325-7718

November 15-16: Piney Woods Heritage Festival, The Crosby Arboretum, Picayune, (601) 799-2311

November 15-17: TRI State Rodeo Finals, Kirk Fordice Equine Center, Fairgrounds, Jackson, (601) 857-5550

November 22-24: Platinum Productions Fall Fest 5D Barrel Run, Kirk Fordice Equine Center, Fairgrounds, Jackson, (228) 860-8104

Commercial Applicator Renewals All Categories - Excluding Aerial

October 1: Central Mississippi Research and Extension Center, Raymond, (601) 857-2284

October 3: Panola County Extension Office, Batesville, (662) 563-6260

October 9: Coastal Research and Extension Center, Biloxi, (228) 546-1001

November 12: North Mississippi Research and Extension Center, Verona, (662) 566-2201

November 14: Delta Research and Extension Center, Stoneville, (662) 686-3205

Private Applicator Training

October 8: Newton County Extension Office, Decatur, (601) 635-7011

