



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

April 2, 2020

Governor Tate Reeves signed Executive Order Number 1466 on April 1, 2020 which orders and directs a statewide "Shelter in Place" from 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 3, 2020 until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, April 20, 2020 to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus in Mississippi and to manage needed healthcare and emergency management resources. This order generally requires all individuals residing in Mississippi to remain at home or their place of residence and closes certain businesses and public amenities. COVID-19 is highly contagious and dangerous. Individuals who can stay at home should do so and refrain from any non-essential activities.

The Order recognizes there are exceptions for essential activities. Mississippians may still obtain food, services or supplies for themselves or their family and can deliver such supplies to others. Individuals may still perform tasks necessary to the health and safety of themselves, their family, or their animals including seeking medical treatment, and can still engage in outdoor activity and recreation if adhering to social distancing guidelines.

Mississippians can also work and travel for work if that work is an essential business or operation. Agriculture and related industries are considered "essential" under Executive Order Number 1463 signed by Gov. Reeves on March 24, 2020.

Agriculture and the industries that support agriculture from seed to harvest are necessary for the food supply chain. Tools and equipment, petroleum and propane, fertilizer and feed: these and more are critical to our farms. Without agriculture Mississippi would not have the food, fiber, fuel and shelter necessary to maintain public health and safety.

Agriculture, livestock, forestry, and related businesses and workers have the authority under the Governor's orders to remain open, operate and perform work as necessary to provide their essential services including necessary travel. County and municipal authorities may not impose restrictions that prevent essential business, including agriculture, from operating at such level necessary to provide their essential services and functions; this includes travel.

To further advise you and others, the following are included as "Essential Business or Operation" by order of the Governor:

Agriculture and farms including food cultivation, livestock, cattle, poultry and seafood operations, livestock auctions, feedlots, dealers and brokers of livestock, livestock transporters, farmer's markets, feed stores, repair of agriculture equipment, gas, diesel and petroleum suppliers, aquaculture, horticulture, chemicals including pesticides, herbicides and fertilizer, producers and distributors, forest product businesses, including those involved in forestry operations, logging, manufacture of lumber and paper products, meat processing facilities, rendering facilities and transporters, feed processing facilities, veterinary services;

We have provided more detailed information and guidance on our website at www.mdac.ms.gov/COVID-19. Thank you for your support of Mississippi farmers and the essential operations of Mississippi agriculture, livestock and forestry.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Gipson".

Andy Gipson
Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce