



# Producers Advisory Council Commodity Session Notes

February 27, 2020





MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™  
COASTAL RESEARCH & EXTENSION CENTER

# MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY COASTAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER

- Serves 21 of 82 Mississippi counties.
- Offers professional services from the MSU Extension Service and Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station in agriculture, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, community resource development, and 4-H.
- Includes approximately 120 employees, including Extension agents and specialists, program associates and assistants, and faculty and staff.

THE MSU COASTAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER IS FUNDED BY THE MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE.



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MS AGRICULTURAL AND  
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

*Extension funding is supplemented by the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium.*



Coastal Research & Extension Center  
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- ★ Coastal Research & Extension Center
- ◆ Extension Unit: Crosby Arboretum
- MAFES Unit: South MS Branch Experiment Station
- MAFES Unit: Experimental Seafood Processing Lab
- MAFES Subunit: Beaumont Horticultural Unit
- MAFES Subunit: White Sand Beef Unit
- MAFES Subunit: McNeill Unit
- County Extension Office
- MS Band of Choctaw Indians Extension Office





Dear Community Partner,

I apologize for the lateness of this publication but we, like yourself and the rest of the world, have been dealing with the unplanned disruption caused by the coronavirus both personally and professionally. During these unprecedented times, it is important for us to continue to reach out to and work with our clients and community partners.

The following pages contain the report from the 2020 Annual Producer Advisory Council Meeting of the Mississippi State University (MSU) Coastal Research and Extension Center (CREC). This meeting allows producers and community leaders like yourself to communicate concerns, identify needs, and express opinions and feedback to allow Mississippi State University to better meet your needs.

The Coastal Research and Extension Center was established in 1988 and is based in Biloxi, MS. CREC oversees Extension programs in the 21 southeastern counties of Mississippi, on the reservation of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and at the Crosby Arboretum in Picayune. CREC also maintains experiment stations in Harrison, Jackson, Perry, and Pearl River Counties under the Mississippi Agriculture & Forestry Experiment Station system.

With 103 individuals in attendance, we had producers from 11 of the 21 counties in our region and 17 of our counties were represented by our agents. There were also 28 other MSU staff members and administrators, representing MSU Extension and MS Agriculture & Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES), which are part of the Division of Agriculture, Forestry & Veterinary Medicine (DAFVM), as well as guests from MS Farm Bureau Federation, and USDA. Overall, this was a very well represented and attended meeting.

If you were able to attend this year's meeting, I want to thank you for your time and participation and look forward to continuing to work with you throughout the year. Moving forward, we challenge you to spread the word about MSU Extension and MAFES and what we do with your colleagues and fellow producers, and we ask you to encourage them to attend future meetings as well.

If you were unable to attend, we invite you to learn more about what we do at [www.coastal.msstate.edu](http://www.coastal.msstate.edu) and hope that you will join us next year at our Annual Meeting held the last of week of February. Your continued support and participation makes our impact on the communities we serve even stronger.

Sincerely,

James E. Henderson, Ph.D.  
Professor and Head  
Coastal Research & Extension Center

**Mississippi State University, United States Department of Agriculture, Counties Cooperating**

We are an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

# thank you

to our Partners



Alex Riser, Assistant VP/ Branch Manager

Pam Vitteck , Sr. Loan Administrator

Beth Sones, Loan Administrator

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# Annual Meeting

of the



**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™**  
COASTAL RESEARCH & EXTENSION CENTER

## Producer Advisory Council

February 27, 2020

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# AGRONOMIC CROPS

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*Dr. Alan Henn, MSU Chair*  
*3 Attendees*

Continue with demonstration plots in the area.

Demonstration plots including Peanuts and Cotton.

Continue to keep growers updated on USDA programs and farm bill.

Polling of local consultants:

- Weed control demonstration in watermelons



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# APICULTURE

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Kim Hancock, MSU Chair  
15 Attendees

Producer Chair – Leilani S. Rosenbaum

Producer Chair-Elect – Leilani S. Rosenbaum

Workshops were announced for upcoming programs for bees and beekeeping.

New policies for Inspection of honey for public sale. These will be from both MSDA and USDA/FDA.

- To complete nutritional information in some of the upcoming policy for labeling may require research and information.
- Palynologist could help study the different types of pollen.

Concerns

- Weather –erratic changes
- Rain, very hard year for weather

Utilizing the genuine MS marketing program – purchasing from only MS



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# COMMERCIAL ORNAMENTAL & HOME HORTICULTURE

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Dr. Gary Bachman and Dr. Patricia Knight, MSU Chairs  
21 Attendees

Dr. Gary Bachmann discussed the following:

Replacement for Dr. Gene Blythe at South MS Branch Experiment Station

- Search in process – Review begins March 1
  - Good applicant pool
  - Specialty Crop (Vegetable) Emphasis

Geoff Denny – left MSU to work in private sector

Internships with Cottage Farms for MSU Student assisted by Jackson Co. Master Gardener

Mississippi Medallion Program 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

- 91 plants promoted since program begun
- Online selection of best plant promoted

25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Southern Gardening

Southern Gardening Book being developed

- 10 years of Southern Garden columns
- Expected release; Winter 2020

Dr. Patricia Knight presented a Research update:

- Crepe myrtle propagation, germplasm
- Native azalea propagation
- Native sweet bay, other hard to root species

Anthony Bowden

- New methods of applying rooting hormones
- Impact of honey on rooting of cuttings
- Surfactants for foliar sprays
- Tissue culture

Jenny Ryals

- Anthocyanin in crepe myrtle color
- Container trail in calibrachoa in coop with LSU, Auburn

Caitlin McLeod

- Poinsettia preferences for color
- Willingness to pay for pot size and color combinations





# COMMERCIAL ORNAMENTAL & HOME HORTICULTURE – Continued

Wayne Adams

- Rooting bunch grapes with honey (Miss Blanc)
- Has tissue culture been tried with Native Azalea
- Hard to root species and effect of hard to root species vs. submersion in dilute solutions

Dr. Jim DelPrince

- Cut flowers – stock and snapdragons
- Professional and Consumer Level Florist Programs
- Master Floral Designer Online Program
- 4 seasons of floral design
  - Extension Agent training – over 600 people trained in basics of floral design
  - Increased awareness of MS grown flowers
  - Flowers for the farmer florist publications
  - Series recognized by ASHS
  - DelPrince recognized by ASHS

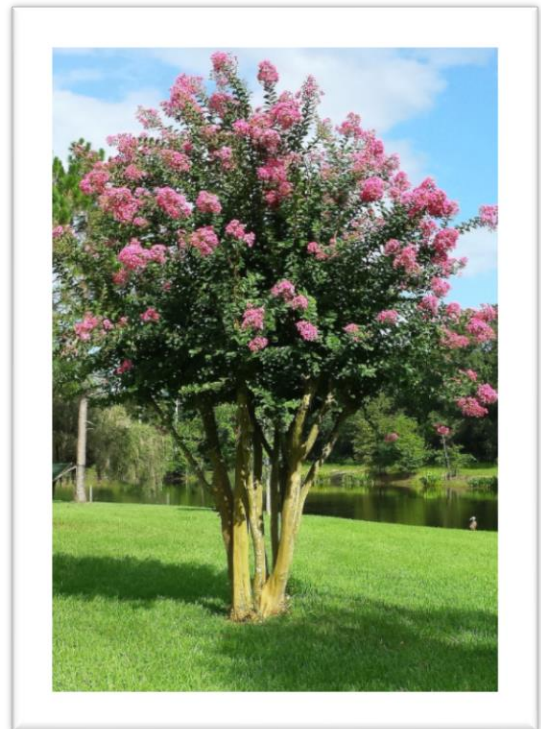
Dr. Eric Stafne

- Passionfruit/Passionflower
- Crosses with Maypop being evaluated
- Characterization of passionfruit genome in Coop Univ. FL

## Open Discussion

Alan Henn

- Would like to be notified of roses with cane diseases
- Dr. Solo's survey showed three mite species fairly evenly distributed across AL, GA, and MS, but density of the main vector (*Phyllocoptes fructiphilus*) is found in low density south of the Rose Rosette incidence.



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# FORESTRY

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Dr. Shaun Tanger and Mr. Butch Bailey, MSU Chairs  
12 Attendees

## Producer Chair – Walt Moeller

- The forestry session was called to order by Butch Bailey and Dr. Shaun Tanger at 11:00 a.m. in Biloxi, MS. Mr. Walt Moeller was elected Producer Chair. The floor was opened for discussion.
- Butch asked for discussion on the major issues the producers are seeing regarding owning or managing timberland.
- Market access and prices were discussed as the major issue. Timber prices for pines are low historically and regionally. Pulpwood prices have been stagnant dependent on location. Prices are somewhat better in south MS vs the northern half of the state. Many producers are worried that the loss of access to markets will prevent them from recouping their investments in their timberland.
- Loggers are struggling due to mill quotas. This relates to the loss of markets and consolidation of our existing markets. There is simply more supply than demand.
- There is a strong feeling that MDOT law enforcement has been engaging in “industry profiling.” Multiple producers reported seeing MDOT watch many heavy trucks from other industries drive past, then pull over every log truck they see.
- Our state’s crumbling road and bridge infrastructure is huge problem and it is believed this has led to the loss of new mills and markets.
- The producers requested studies on mid-rotation timber stand improvement techniques such as mixed species planting, mechanical treatments, and thinning regimes.
- Cogongrass is still a constant issue and educating other agencies on controlling and spreading issues was mentioned. Coordinating the county, state, federal, etc. efforts would help the spread of cogongrass, most specifically educating the county Supervisors and their road crews on how not to spread cogongrass. Programs are available in certain areas for cogongrass chemical application.





## FORESTRY– Continued

- Silvopasture methods were discussed to integrate livestock, forage production and forestry.
- There was discussion of the need for a land use app that could help loggers or consultants see who needs a thinning, cut, etc. This would facilitate loggers and landowners in finding each other and helping owners of smaller tracts join up with others to make their timber more attractive to loggers.



- Sustainability issues were a concern, especially with the new emphasis many mills are placing on “certified wood.” In the past, it was relatively easy to get a certified inspector from the American Tree Farm Program to approve timberland in MS, but with the staff reductions at the MS Forestry Commission, this is no longer the case, and many landowners have been waiting for years to be inspected.
- Landowner training was presented as a need especially with prescribed burning. Other topics discussed were insect ID, good return on properly managed timber, etc.
- Pine beetles have been historically bad the past few years. This is due in large part to delayed thinning and severely overstocked stands.
- There was mention about economic comparisons of longleaf vs. loblolly pines. Dr. Tanger has materials on this and can provide to anyone upon request.

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# FRUITS & VEGETABLES

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Dr. Eric Stafne and Dr. Christine Coker, MSU Chairs  
42 Attendees

Producer Chair – Judy Hudson

Dirk Dedeaux discussed FSA programs available to producers including Organic certification assistance, Non-Insured Crop Assistance, and Disaster programs.

Rebecca Melanson spoke about the services of the MSU Plant Diagnostic Lab other resources available to producers including:

- Greenhouse production publication
- Biomechanical control publication
- Vegetable Grower's Handbook - [www.vegcrophandbook.com](http://www.vegcrophandbook.com)
- Disease Studies on Cucurbit Downy Mildew
- Smallfruit.org – website available to producers



Britton Walker with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce discussed FSMA Produce Safety Rule handled under state authority and education for produce growers.

Educational opportunities for agents and increased resources for producers have been made available by joining the Small Fruit Consortium. This is a group of 9 southern states work together on small fruit crops blueberry, caneberry, strawberry, muscadine, and bunch grapes.

Eric Stafne spoke on some ongoing research and topics including;

- Caneberries
  - Resources and education on Raspberries. Not great for market growers due to climate.
  - Primacane blackberries grow and fruit on first year's growth. Looking in to use with high tunnels to avoid blooming during the warm summer months.
- Blueberries
  - Container gardening research is being conducted by Guihong Bi in Starkville as well as in Poplarville.
- Muscadines and grapes
  - Producers would like to see a list of contact information compiled for producers to reach out and share information between each other.
- Fish Fertilizers
  - The use of saltwater and freshwater fish for fertilizer in horticultural crops.
- Peaches
  - Disease issues common to Mississippi peaches.
  - Consideration for varieties and chill hours on the gulf coast.





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# POULTRY

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Dr. Tom Tabler, MSU Chair  
7 Attendees

- Mr. Tabler gave an introduction and a brief overview of topics discussed in the 2019 Coastal Region Producer Advisory Council meeting along with the difference in the commercial poultry industry along with backyard poultry growers.
- Labeling country of origin was brought up and whether it was still being enforced.
- Controlling predators from backyard flocks on various measures in protecting the flock from those aerial predators.
- With egg production there are farms that have gone to the cage free method to be more conducive to the perspectives of a consumer. There was also discussion on the difference of the white shell vs. a brown shell and that there is no nutrient value difference. The brown shell is mostly associated with being organic by consumers whether the eggs are organic or not. It was also discussed that there are various stipulations that organic producers follow in order to be considered as an organic producer.
- Discussion began on avian influenza that it is carried by migratory birds such as waterfowl. It can be transmitted through secretion of respiratory infections, feces, and saliva. There are various versions of the H and N portion of the avian influenza. There was discussion on the procedures taken if there is an avian influenza outbreak.
- Implementing an antibiotic free program to offer to commercial growers. Majority of commercial poultry industries are antibiotic free, and some are rotating in and out of the program.
- Ways to decrease stress in your poultry include allowing more room, less chance of a disease breaking out, and a longer time between sets of birds. This could also cause the grower to lose profit through having less poultry in the house, having less pounds to sell, and diseases become more occurring, etc.



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# HORSE & SMALL RUMINANTS

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Mr. Brad Jones, MSU Chair  
10 Attendees

Producer Chair – Mike Mitchell

## Conservation Grazing Research Grant Application Update

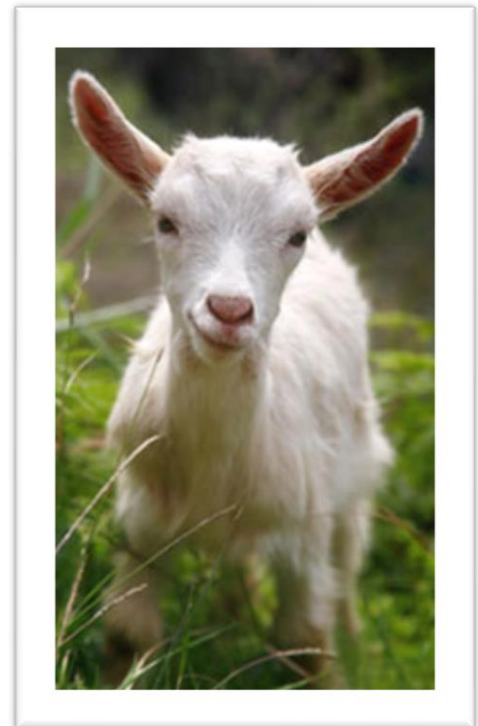
- Seeking producers willing to rent goats or Pineywoods cattle in case of approved funding for an upcoming small-scale research study.
- Study will research the feasibility of conservation grazing of goats and Pineywoods cattle.
- Research trials
  - Small pilot areas of managed wildlife lands.
  - Put in livestock for a set amount of time and allow them to graze.
  - Look at how beneficial this conservation grazing process is to overall ecosystem vs. clearing forested land for livestock production.
- Will find out if funding is granted around Sept 2020.
  - If funding is approved, there will be a need for an advisory council – paid positions.
- Study would occur in Grand Bay NERR in Moss Point.
- Contact: Dr. Eric Sparks

## Small Ruminant Specialist Update

- Searching for small ruminant specialist to be housed on campus.
- Should have goat specialist on campus within next 6 months.
- Primarily adult and some youth responsibilities.

## Small Ruminants Production Resources

- 4 Extension Agents across the state have been trained in small ruminants production via the Small Ruminant Master Producer workshop in Tennessee.
  - Trained agents and tool kits are available to assist producers.



## Product Labeling for use on Small Ruminants

- Problems with small ruminants not being on label for products used for livestock health.
- Studies must be replicated for 6-8 years before labels can be approved by USDA/FDA for private use.
- Possibility of research opportunities to get more labels approved for ruminant health enhancers.





# HORSE & SMALL RUMINANTS – Continued

## Educational Opportunities

- 2019 Small Ruminant Workshop in Hattiesburg was well-received. Another workshop will be scheduled for 2020, date TBA.
- Dr. Clay Cavinder does several workshops across state.
- Extension is trying to build interest for cattle workshop in our area (low interest in 2019).
- Hands on Horses Workshop to be held April 25 at MSU's horse unit in Starkville.
- If there are interests in a county for educational programs, reach out to local agents who will coordinate with Dr. Cavinder.

## 4-H Youth Programs

- 4-H livestock program remains constant if not growing in size.
- District Horse Show will be hosted by Harrison County Fairgrounds – 75% of participants are in southern portion of our region.

## Wildlife Management

- Trying to improve wildlife management resources within Extension.
- Large scale hog hunts may be limited in our area due to small size of land available to host.
  - Working with APHIS using some of the newer traps in areas that can't be hunted.

## Hay and Forage Quality

- Needing to help producers understand importance of quality of grass, hay, cost of getting products.
- Forage analysis available through several labs across the state.
- High moisture levels have been negatively affecting hay and grass quality.

## Parasites

- Recent trend: parasite levels are higher across region with heavy rain and high moisture levels.
- Some dewormers are not as effective in our area due to humidity and rain.

## Horse Health

- Continuing work in Mississippi on studying COPD/equine pasture asthma.
  - Have not received updates on results.
  - Disease seems to only be prevalent in SE area of state.
  - Could possibly be linked to pasture grazing.

## Sheep Production

- Issues with cost effectiveness of wool production now that incentives are not available.
- Increase of interest in small scale wool production and in-house production of wool products.
- Problems with wool quality due to moisture leads to lower prices.
- Current trend in hair sheep production to avoid issues in wool production.
- Looking for creative wool markets.
- Contact local Extension office for contacts to help with shearing.

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# LIVESTOCK

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Dr. Daniel Rivera, MSU Chair  
18 Attendees

Producer Chair – Mike Mitchell

## Updates on Programs from MSU ES:

- Castration study on band versus live castration (banemine). Knife cut cattle came back quicker than banded in 56-day study after castration.
- Rumencin versus bovitech study looking at administration at cattle arrival, during grazing period, and then swapping treatments.
- Developmental implant in suppressing estrus in females in feeder cattle. Also looking at it as a way to synchronize heifers.
- Alcorn State asked in November 2019 for help in offering a small farmers conference in Hattiesburg. There will be a BQA training at the Poplarville unit for participants of the conference. April 13-14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Small farmers conference. Gerald Jones at Alcorn is the contact.
- BCIA annual meeting is March 4<sup>th</sup> and sale is on March 5<sup>th</sup>.
- AI schools in March and October 22-24<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Sign up as soon as possible.
- Contact your county agent in order to set up a BQA course.
- Calving selection workshop in April in Starkville.
- Focus on research at Starkville is on cattle health and management.
- Southern Producers Replacement Heifer Sale in Hattiesburg every year in August.
- Beef and Poultry Expo April 2<sup>nd</sup> in Smith County. 3 different speakers, door prizes. Held at the Smith County Ag Center in Raleigh, MS.

*Note: some dates have passed and/or were cancelled but are left here for reference of annual events.*

## Dirk Dedeaux with FSA:

- Executive Director for Poplarville and Hattiesburg
- Livestock Indemnity Program - Disaster Payment for cattle killed by natural catastrophe.
- Disaster Program
  - Must keep accurate farm records, how many cows, bought cattle, sold cattle, birth records.
- ELAP – Emergency Livestock Assistance Program
- Register your farm with the FSA office
- Discussed the consolidation of FSA and NRCS offices. In the next 2 years, the district will only have 4 executive county directors to cover our half of the state.
- Suggestions for producers wanting to switch to Lucedale office is to go to the Wayne county office and submit a written request to transfer their farm to George County.





# LIVESTOCK – Continued

## Producer Suggestions:

- Problems with smut grass. Any research being done on this grass and how to treat it.
  - Velpar is the only label for smut grass.
  - Working the ground, chisel plowing, incorporating ryegrass and other grasses are more beneficial than spraying.
  - Smut grass seeds itself, and can stay dormant for years so disturbing the ground on the roots help.
  - Lime the ground, keep soil fertility up.
- First of April 2020 any bull over 18 months that changes hands must have a Trich test
  - Questions on how the process will work at sale barns, other situations still need to be answered but the Board of Animal Health will oversee these regulations.
- Producers expressed a lot of issues with the consolidations of district offices in the Farm Service Agency and USDA offices. Especially with the closing of the Wayne/Greene office and the Covington office.
- Win Ellington with Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith's office provided some updates and talked about the Senator's concern with the consolidations and what it means for our producers.
- Ag Econ Department at MSU is redoing a lot of the old record keeping apps and paperwork for producers in order to keep proper records.
  - Per cow costs, per acre planting costs, etc.
  - Jeff Johnson in Ag Econ is the contact.
  - Grant in place to help understand the costs of hay and hay management.



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# MARINE RESOURCES

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Dr. Ben Posadas, Dr. Marcus Drymon, Dr. Eric Sparks,  
Dr. Sam Chang and Dr. Mark Woodrey, MSU Chairs  
21 Attendees

Producer Chair – Frank Parker

- Dr. Drymon began the meeting with a welcome and introduction of the presenters.
- Prior to the presentations, Mr. Dierk Dedeaux of the Farm Service spoke about oyster farms. He has registered 14 oyster farms in South MS. He wants to register additional farms so that the Farm Service can provide crop insurance to oyster producers in the future.
- Dr. Posadas spoke about the Horticulture and Marine Resource Economics Program. He studies horticulture economics to help growers in MS, produces a monthly seafood marketing newsletter, and facilitates the Oyster Farming Cooperative in South MS. He researches the economic impacts of marine debris on shrimpers and studies the cost analysis of softshell blue crab pond growout in commercial ponds. He also explores the economic impacts of aquatic animal diseases, coastal hazards, and surimi production from catfish byproducts. He manages multiple websites and social media accounts related to marine resources.
- Dr. Woodrey spoke about the Avian Ecology & Coastal Conservation Program. He helps develop Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve's research programs, particularly those dealing with habitat restoration. He studies the distribution and abundance of marsh birds, examines microplastics ingestion by marsh birds, investigates the effects of prescribed fire in coastal marshes, and conducts outreach and education to teach the public about birds.
- Sonia Vedral spoke about sea-level rise in coastal MS. She communicates – through the Northern Gulf of Mexico Sentinel Site Cooperative – the importance and urgency of sea-level rise, which is happening in MS, to the public. She has created several resources and programs to facilitate this communication. She also collaborates with researchers to help shape research projects based on sea-level rise.
- Dr. Chang spoke about the Experimental Seafood Processing Laboratory. He has recently purchased new equipment to expand the lab's studies. He works to understand the activity of pathogens and is in the process of certifying his lab for vibrio and coliform testing. He studies catfish byproduct utilization, soybean protein enhancement, x-ray optimization, and catfish shelf-life extension.



## MARINE RESOURCES – Continued



- Dr. Drymon spoke about the Marine Fisheries Ecology Program. He conducts a long-term bottom longline survey off the MS/AL coast to learn about large fishes and sharks. Data from the survey influenced the opening (this month) of a commercial fishery for coastal sharks in MS. He also tags tarpon to learn about their migrations, leads the Extension component of the Great Red Snapper Count, and communicates fisheries science to the public through various outreach events.
- Dr. Sparks spoke about the Coastal Conservation and Restoration Program. He tracks the type and quantity of microplastics throughout the Gulf, educates the public (youth and adults) about nature and environmental stewardship through MS Student Naturalist, MS Master Naturalist, and Plan-It Marsh, and studies the design and effectiveness of living shorelines. He is working on a living shorelines cost-sharing program, during which he will certify contractors so they can implement living shorelines.





The Mississippi State University Extension Service provides research-based information, educational programs, and technology transfer focused on issues and needs of the people of Mississippi, enabling them to make informed decisions about their economic, social, and cultural well-being.

The **Coastal Extension Region Office** serves these 21 southeastern Mississippi counties.  
**1815 Popp's Ferry Rd \* Biloxi, MS 39532 \* Phone 228-388-4710 \* Fax 228-388-1375**

**Dr. James Henderson, Head \* Ms. Tawnya Holliman, Interim Regional Ext Coordinator**

County	County Coordinator	Physical Street/Mailing Address	Phone	Fax
<b>Clarke</b>	Christy King	101 Westwood Ave., PO Box 109 Quitman, MS 39355	601-776-3951	601-776-1023
<b>Covington</b>	Ellen Russell	68 Industrial Park Drive Collins, MS 39428	601-765-8252	601-765-5009
<b>Forrest</b>	Tawnya Holliman	952 Sullivan Dr. Hattiesburg, MS 39401	601-545-6083	601-545-6173
<b>George</b>	Heath Steede	7128 Highway 198 East, PO Box 738 Lucedale, MS 39452	601-947-4223	601-947-4224
<b>Greene</b>	Angie Byrd	#2 Oak Street, PO Box 730 Leakesville, MS 39451	601-394-2702	601-394-2741
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<b>Harrison</b>	Sheran Watkins	9229 Hwy 49, PO Drawer Z Gulfport, MS 39502	228-865-4227	228-868-1470
<b>Jackson</b>	Terri Thompson	4111 Amonett St, Ste E, PO Box 1248 Pascagoula, MS 39568	228-769-3047	228-769-3347
<b>Jasper</b>	Kelby King	37B West 8th Ave., PO Box 506 Bay Springs, MS 39422	601-764-2314	601-764-2035
<b>Jeff Davis</b>	Thomas Brewer	2304 Pearl Avenue, PO Box 580 Prentiss, MS 39474	601-792-5121	601-792-5123
<b>Jones</b>	Kimberly Hancock	515 North 5th Ave., PO Box 448 Laurel, MS 39441	601-428-5201	601-428-3158
<b>Kemper</b>	Malikah Jones	Rt 4, Box 332 Old Scooba Rd, PO Box 339 DeKalb, MS 39328	601-743-2837	601-743-5581
<b>Lamar</b>	Ross Overstreet	216 Shelby Street Ste B, PO Box 419 Purvis, MS 39475	601-794-3910	601-794-5515
<b>Lauderdale</b>	Patty Swearingen	1022 Hwy 19 South Meridian, MS 39301	601-482-9764	601-482-9777
<b>Marion</b>	Amanda Woods	1060 Hwy 13 South Columbia, MS 39429	601-736-8251	601-731-3791
<b>Neshoba</b>	Austin Ainsworth	12000 Hwy 15 N, Ste 2 Philadelphia, MS 39350	601-656-4011	601-656-5505
<b>Newton</b>	Katrina McCalphie	65 Seventh Street, PO Box 188 Decatur, MS 39327	601-635-7011	601-635-2146
<b>Pearl River</b>	Eddie Smith	417 Hwy 11 North Poplarville, MS 39470	601-403-2280	601-795-0651
<b>Perry</b>	Brittany Odum	103-B 2nd Street West, PO Box 405 New Augusta, MS 39462	601-964-3668	601-964-8480
<b>Stone</b>	Brad Jones	214 N Critz St, Suite A Wiggins, MS 39577	601-928-5286	601-928-4677
<b>Wayne</b>	Jessica Sibley	810-A Chickasawhay St Waynesboro, MS 39367	601-735-2243	601-735-6264





# MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™

## MS AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

**Mission:** The Coastal Research and Extension Center is Mississippi State University's "southern exposure," linking residents of the coastal region to the university. The center's mission is to conduct research and education programs aimed at developing a better understanding and use of renewable and nonrenewable resources in south Mississippi. Its applied research and educational programs with biological, physical and social systems focus on enhancing the quality of life of residents of Mississippi and other Gulf states. Our priorities address the specific needs of diverse communities including the health and well-being of the people and responsible stewardship of unique natural resources.

**Vision:** Coastal Research and Extension Center is the leader in providing responsive solutions addressing social, environmental, and economic integration of Research and Extension.

### **Coastal Research and Extension Center**

1815 Popp's Ferry Rd  
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### **Beaumont Horticultural Unit**

475 Hwy 15  
Beaumont, MS 39423  
Phone: 601-788-6616  
Fax: 601-788-5522

### **Experimental Seafood Processing Laboratory**

3411 Frederic Street  
Pascagoula, MS 39567  
Phone: 228-762-7783

### **South MS Branch Experiment Station**

**Includes Poplarville, White Sands, and McNeill Units**

810 Highway 26 West \* PO Box 193  
Poplarville, MS 39470  
Poplarville Phone: 601-795-4525  
White Sands Phone: 601-795-4805





# Northern Gulf Aquatic Food Research Center

**“FROM THE WATER TO YOUR PLATE”**

## **A Sea of Resources**

Despite Mississippi's mere 44 miles of coastline, an abundance of natural resources and economic impact lies just beyond the sandy beaches. Coastal Mississippi was once renowned as “the seafood capital of the world.” While the tides of production may have shifted with more than 90 percent of the fish consumed in the U.S. imported, the Gulf Coast is still a significant seafood producer for the entire United States.

Gulf seafood contains many of the nutritional and taste qualities desired by consumers, including high-quality protein and vitamins, low calories and saturated fats, and high omega-3 fatty acids. Consumers have responded to these qualities by increasing seafood consumption, as reflected by a nearly 3-fold increase in consumption of shrimp in the U.S. over the past 25 years. Yet, safety and quality of seafood products remain an important public health and economic issue as illustrated by recent water quality related beach closures and consumption restrictions. In recent decades, the once vibrant seafood industry along the Mississippi Gulf Coast has experienced numerous natural and man-made catastrophic setbacks, including Hurricane Katrina, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, harmful algal blooms, and multiple openings of the Bonnet Carré Spillway. These events have simultaneously reduced seafood harvest, created water quality and food safety concerns, and altered consumer perceptions and market demand for Gulf seafood products.

## **Changing the Tide**

As a land-grant university, Mississippi State University is invested in research that improves quality and increases quantity of food. As one of the top universities in the nation for agricultural research funding, Mississippi State University is uniquely positioned with the expertise to address every aspect of the food chain, from the laboratory to the farm to the market to the table. The Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES) was established to conduct agricultural research to improve yields and profits for producers. The MAFES Experimental Seafood Processing Lab in Pascagoula has served the industry for more than 20 years.

In addition to the team of scientists and specialists at the Pascagoula Seafood Processing Laboratory, MSU scientists across the state are addressing many of the issues facing the seafood industry. What the northern Gulf of Mexico region lacks is a strong, modern seafood research center. The proposed development will establish a robust, state-of-the-art base for conducting seafood safety testing, food science research, and food product innovations.

The interest of a multitude of state and federal agencies on the Gulf Coast creates opportunities for collaboration and synergism to promote the economic development of the region's fish and seafood industries. In addition to advancing science and technology to promote the utilization of seafood and catfish, the Northern Gulf Aquatic Food Research Center will build a strong value-added food processing cluster on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

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## **Waves of Opportunity**

There is an opportunity to restore consumer confidence and increase market share for Gulf products. The ability to provide local and rapid quality assurance and safety testing for all aquatic food along with the development of value-added products will help restore the once vibrant Mississippi Gulf Coast seafood industry. However, limited access to such capabilities requires shipping products multiple states away for food safety analyses. The economic development and revitalization of Mississippi Gulf Coast fisheries, seafood, and value-added products and markets are dependent on enhanced capacity for safety testing and product development research on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.





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MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURAL AND  
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

**Preliminary Concept  
Renderings for Mississippi  
State University Northern  
Gulf Aquatic Research  
Center**



**PHASE 1** is the construction of an analytical laboratory. This biosafety laboratory will provide pathogen analyses and measure chemical residues in water, fisheries, and aquatic food products, which includes testing for heavy metals, vibrio, norovirus, and algal bloom toxins. Currently, limited access to these capabilities requires shipping products multiple states away for food safety analyses, which causes delayed results, hampering the ability to get aquatic food from the sea to the plate in an effective and timely manner.

**PHASE II** is the construction of a pilot plant for conducting novel processing to extend shelf life and produce value-added high quality aquatic foods. Phase II will allow for the development of new food products for both utilized fisheries such as snappers, drum, oysters, and shrimp and underutilized fisheries such as the coastal herring and associated species complex (i.e., Spanish sardines, chub mackerel, Atlantic thread herring, round herring, scaled sardines, and Gulf menhaden).

**PHASE III** will provide business incubator facilities allowing for new value-added product development by entrepreneurs in an environment that promotes collaboration between commercial partners and food science researchers. The incubator will spur economic growth through the development of food products and development of national and international markets for both utilized and underutilized Northern Gulf fisheries. The center will provide six business incubator spaces for the development of new value-added product development. These spaces, coupled with other center facilities at the complex and Mississippi State expertise—sensory testing, analytical and safety testing, package and shelf life testing, market and economic studies—will equip start-ups with the tools they need to be successful.

## Finding the Pearls

**Total Economic Impacts/Construction:**

**\$19,000,000**

**Total Economic Impacts/Seafood Processing Research and Outreach Employment:**

**\$21,772,119**

**Total Economic Impacts/Seafood Processing Research and Outreach Expenditures:**

**\$18,711,733**

## Contact Information

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# MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™

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Mississippi State University Extension Service  
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