

State of Mississippi

Department of
Agriculture and Commerce

Lester Spell, Jr., D.V.M.
Commissioner



Annual Report 2002



**MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND
COMMERCE**

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December 31, 2002

To The People of Mississippi

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) promotes Mississippi's agricultural industry and regulates laws governing all sectors from on-farm production to processing to retail markets. It is a great responsibility to oversee our State's largest industry with a \$4.5 billion value for its citizens. The MDAC is committed to agriculture and creating an environment that gives Mississippi farmers and related industries opportunities and advantages. Detailed information is included in this report; however, the following is a summary.

The Market Development Division serves in promotional activities for Mississippi businesses. The Market Development Division's focus on consumer education enhances public awareness of Mississippi's superior quality products. "Make Mine Mississippi" is a logo identification program with the purpose of promoting Mississippi products at home and worldwide. This program continues to grow and currently 820 companies have met the criteria, registered, and received official promotional assistance. Also, the "Mississippi Market Bulletin", published by the Department with 37,500 subscribers, provides a venue for consumer and vendor contact.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce's regulatory responsibilities extend from farm to marketplace. Besides the regulation of foods, the MDAC helps insure the health of consumers through sanitation inspections in grocery stores. The Department is also responsible for the regulation of pesticides, certifying gasoline pumps, and checking weights and measures of scales.

In cooperation with the Mississippi Department of Health and the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), the MDAC assists with the Women's, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. Additionally, for this year Mississippi secured funds to add a seniors program. These programs make fresh fruits and vegetables available to some low-income and nutritionally at-risk citizens. Through the Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs, Mississippi not only enhances the quality of life for these participants, it contributes to the economic well being of small farmers.

The MDAC, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), provides agricultural statistics and a food inspection service for fruits, vegetables, nuts, and poultry. This joint effort operates a news service for the trade of livestock, fruits, and vegetables in the State. MDAC and USDA staff also has begun to estimate and verify farm acreage for specific crops through computerized remote sensing.

The Commissioner of Agriculture assures informed qualified leadership through service on several state boards such as:

Council of State Agencies on Agriculture
Mississippi Board of Animal Health
Mississippi Central Farmers' Market Board
Mississippi Fair Commission
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Permit Board
Egg Marketing Board
State Seed Board
State Soil & Water Conservation Committee

Our Department has progressed over the last year with many challenges remaining for the coming year. The accomplishments of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce are through the joint efforts of State and Federal agencies, the Mississippi Legislature, and a sincerely dedicated staff.

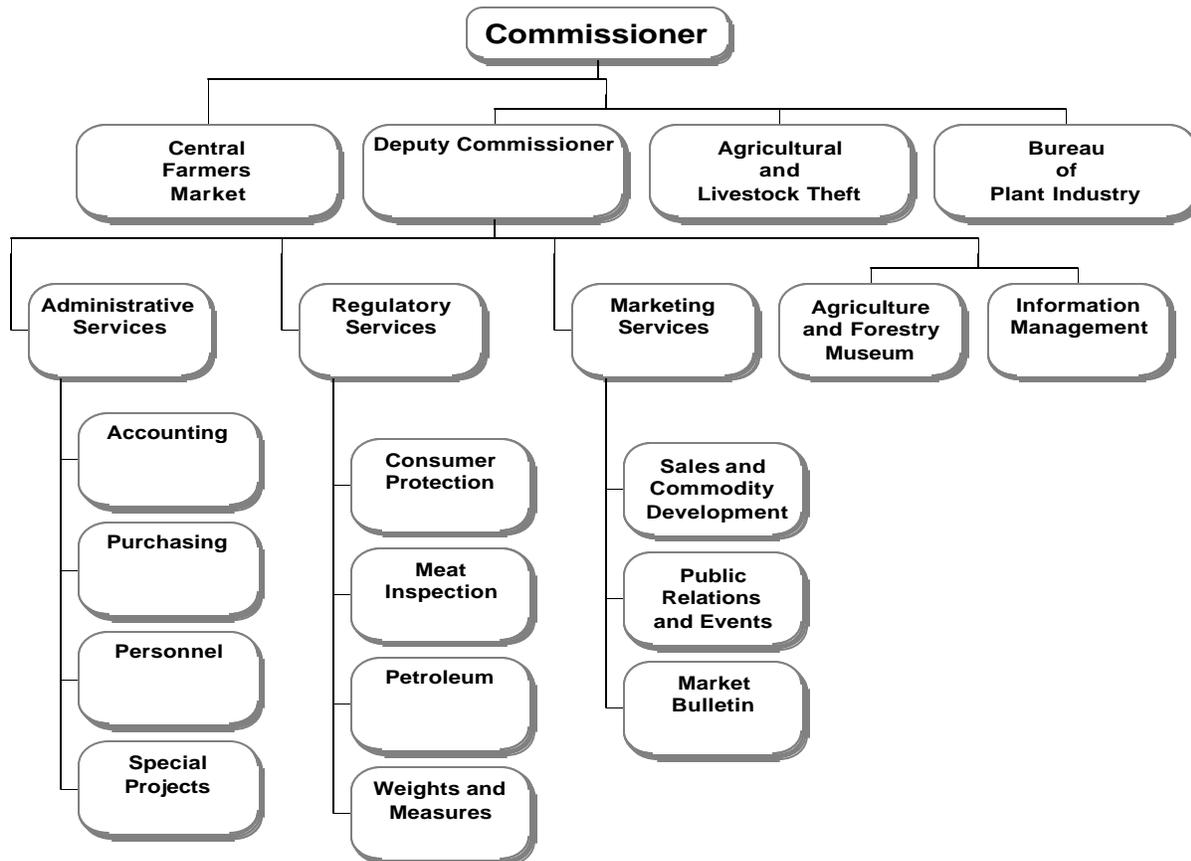


Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lester Spell, Jr., DVM".

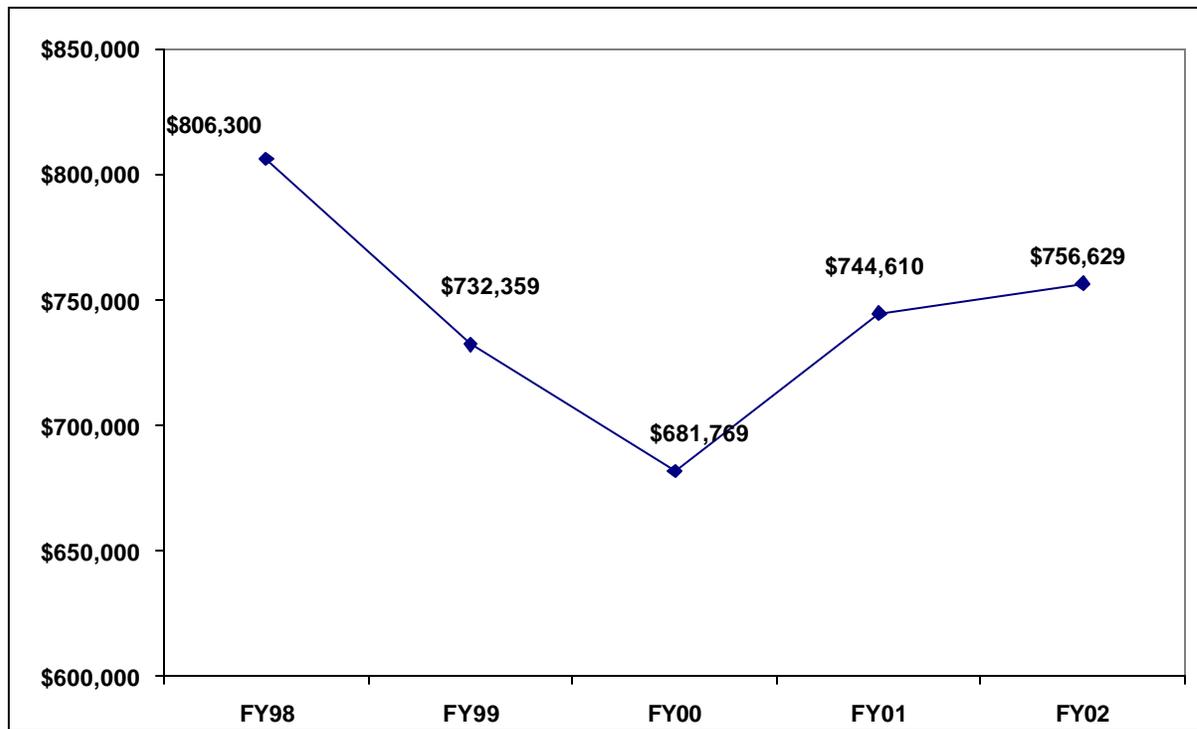
Lester Spell, Jr., DVM
Commissioner

ADMINISTRATION



In the area of personnel, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce continued in the year 2002 with fewer personnel than it had when Commissioner Spell took office in 1996. Budget constraints were still a major concern in 2002, and although authorized positions for fiscal year 2001 stood at 300 for the combined divisions of the department, because of the budget constraints, the divisions were unable to fill vacant positions. Employees however, continued to assume additional responsibilities and continued to perform at a high competence rate.

The agency will continue moving ahead professionally with its advanced planning, dedicated employees, continued upgrading of modern computer technology, efficient operations and continued employee training.



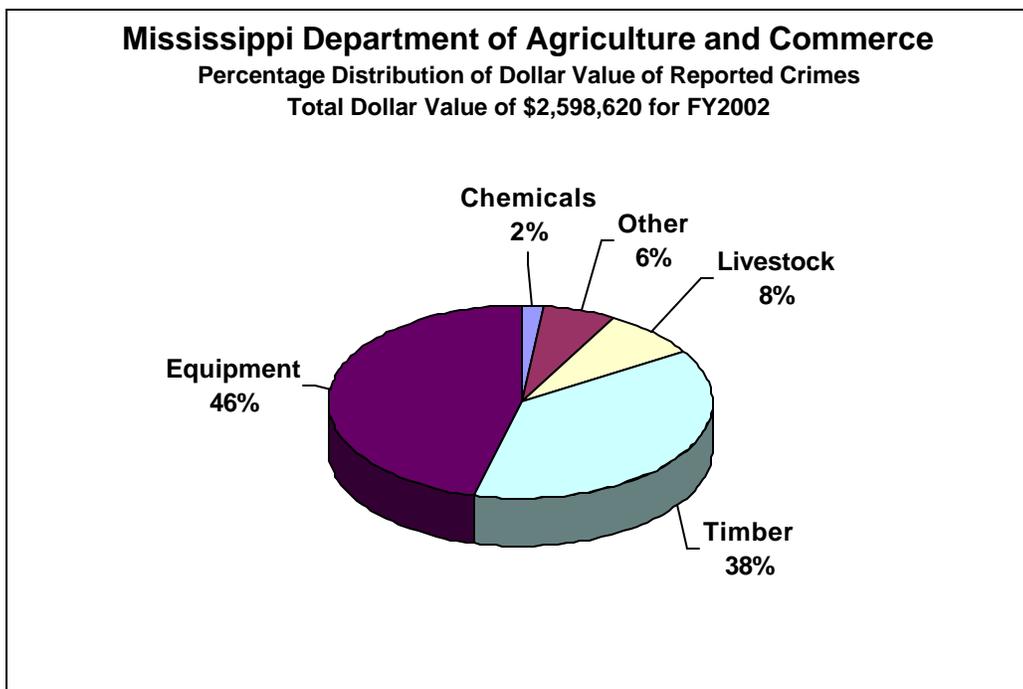
License and Inspection Fee Collections for FY97 through FY01

The above fees include *Market Bulletin*, Grain, Egg Marketing, Rice fees, Soybean fees, Weights and Measures, and other regulatory fees.

AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK THEFT BUREAU

The Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau was created in 1993 to assist in the investigation of all farm and agriculture-related crimes. The bureau has a director, secretary / brand registrar and nine investigators, one for each Mississippi Highway Patrol District. Investigators are charged with enforcing all state laws pertaining to theft of cattle, horses, swine, poultry, fish, farm equipment and chemicals, timber and all other farm or agriculture-related crimes. The bureau is also responsible for the investigation and prosecution of all persons who violate any of the laws administered by the Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

In addition to its law enforcement function, the Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau maintains registration of all livestock brands. Livestock in Mississippi do not have to be branded; however, if they are branded, the brand must be registered. The brands are recorded for a five (5) year period at a cost of five (5) dollars. We are presently in our fourth year, which means renewals began FY2002. Registered brands are published in book form and distributed to law enforcement around the state. Presently, we have about 1,500 active brands on file.



AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY / NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL AVIATION MUSEUM

The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry / National Agricultural Aviation Museum exist to promote and encourage knowledge and appreciation of Mississippi and the Deep South's history. The mission of the Museum should be to provide an environment for learning and reflecting on the past, specifically the cultural, economic, and social history. In accomplishing this, the Museum shall collect, preserve, and interpret material related to persons, eras, and events in the State's history. At the same time, the Museum must operate in a fiscally responsible manner by offering entertainment and other activities that will permit expansion of programs and services provided to the public.

The Museum provides a safe, educational, and enjoyable experience to the visitors of our State and the city of Jackson. In 2002, the Museum welcomed 129,205 visitors from all 50 states and from 54 nations.

In 2002, the Museum was fortunate to have numerous major repairs, as well as to purchase some new equipment to help make our facility a better and more efficient complex. The following is a list of some of the repairs as well as additions.

1. New roof on Ethnic Center
2. Floor replaced in Sparkman Auditorium
3. Repair and re-finish Forestry Auditorium Floor
4. Repair and re-finish Ethnic Center Floor
5. Replace roof on School House
6. Replace roof on Farmers Market
7. Replace carpet in Heritage Center
8. Overlay existing asphalt
9. New Freezer/cooler for Café
10. Received corn heaters for Ethnic Center and Forestry Auditorium
11. New roof on Masonic Lodge
12. New roof on Craft Center

In addition to these items, the Museum added new signage throughout the Heritage Center and plans to add new signage on outside exhibits. Future plans include push button viewing in the School House, Blacksmith Shop and other facilities, which are done by staff and volunteers. The new 4-H exhibit building should be complete by the spring of 2004, which will highlight 4-H facts, past and present, in Mississippi. The Museum is also completing the new, modern Soil and Water exhibit.

The following is a list of the Museum's revenues from the past 4 years:

The Museum's Revenue

Total revenue Fiscal Year 1999: \$570,755.00

Total revenue Fiscal Year 2000: \$604,308.96

Total revenue Fiscal Year 2001: \$344,982.14

Total revenue Fiscal Year 2002: \$442,834.49

The Museum is a great place to host a special event or festival such as the Easter Egg Hunt and Parade, Fourth of July Celebration, Celtic Festival, Pumpkin Picking, Halloween Carnival, and Harvest Festival. The staff of the Museum is planning events for next year that will include a new event featuring Cajun music, food and art.



BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY

The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) serves as the Plant Protection and Quarantine Division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. It carries out regulatory programs pertaining to plant pests, pesticides, honeybees, seed, animal feed, fertilizer, lime and soil/plant amendments (additives). Additionally, it cooperates with the Agricultural Aviation Board of Mississippi in administration of state laws pertaining to licensing of agricultural aviators and maintains cooperative agreements with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in administration and enforcement of state and federal laws.

The Bureau of Plant Industry building which is located on the Mississippi State University campus in Starkville was renamed the Robert H. McCarty Building on March 5, 2001.



*Bureau Of Plant Industry 2001-2002**Purpose*

The State Plant Board was established under the Mississippi Plant Act of 1918, Sections 69-25-1 through 69-25-47, Mississippi Code 1972, to protect the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state from the introduction and spread of destructive plant pests. In 1971, the Mississippi Legislature abolished the board and established the Division of Plant Industry within the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce to assume the board's duties and responsibilities. In 1991, the name of the Division of Plant Industry was changed to the Bureau of Plant Industry. In 1996, the state agriculture department's Seed Division and Feed, Fertilizer and Lime Division were placed under the administration of the Bureau.

Activities

- Serves as the Plant Protection and Quarantine Division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.
- Carries out regulatory programs pertaining to plant pests, pesticides, honey bees, seed, animal feed, fertilizer, lime and soil/plant amendments (additives).
- Cooperates with the Agricultural Aviation Board of Mississippi in administration of state laws pertaining to pesticides by aerial application.
- Maintains cooperative agreements with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in administration and enforcement of state and federal laws.

Legislative Authority

The Bureau is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the following state statutes:

- **Mississippi Plant Act of 1918** Sections 69-25-1 through 69-25-47
- **Mississippi Bee Disease Act of 1920** Sections 69-25-101 through 69-25-109
- **Regulation of Professional Services Law of 1938** Sections 69-19-1 through 69-19-11
- **Crop Spraying and Licensing of Aerial Applicators Law of 1952** Sections 69-21-1 through 69-21-27
- **Mississippi Pure Seed Law of 1968** Sections 69-3-1 through 69-3-29
- **Mississippi Commercial Feed Law of 1972** Sections 75-45-151 through 75-45-193
- **Mississippi Fertilizer Law of 1972** Sections 75-47-1 through 75-47-39
- **Mississippi Pesticide Law of 1975** Sections 69-23-1 through 69-23-27
- **Mississippi Pesticide Application Act of 1975** Sections 69-23-101 through 69-23-133

- **Mississippi Soil and Plant Amendment Law of 1978** Sections 69-24-1 through 69-24-27
-
- **Mississippi Boll Weevil Management Act of 1993** Sections 69-37-1 through 69-37-33
- **Mississippi Agricultural Liming Materials Act of 1993** Sections 69-39-1 through 69-39-19

The Bureau is also designated by the federal government as the state agency responsible for administration and enforcement of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act of 1947 (FIFRA).



Personnel Changes

Michael D. Tagert was named director and state entomologist of the Bureau in April 2002 after the retirement of Edwin G. Dyess. Mr. Dyess had 37 years of service with the Bureau and his dedication to the department will be missed. Keith Davis was named deputy director in May 2002. Keith previously served as a Branch Director for pesticide enforcement. Harry Fulton was named assistant state entomologist in May 2002. Harry previously served as division director for the pesticide division.

*Accomplishments For 2001-2002**Plant Pest Program*

- Conducted 754 nursery inspections and 460 nursery dealer inspections.
- Conducted 235 inspections for Brown Garden Snail on plant materials shipped from California and intercepted infested plants at seven nursery dealer sites.
- Issued 681 phytosanitary certificates on plant materials shipped out-of-state.
- Found no significant levels of Sweet Potato Weevil after conducting trapping activities on commercial sweet potato acreage, storage houses and plant beds.
- Made no positive finds of Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Chrysanthemum White Rust, Viburnum Leaf Beetle and Asian Longhorned Beetle after conducting visual detection surveys.
- Reported first occurrence of Asian Ambrosia Beetle – *xylosandrus mutilatus*.
- Found no occurrence of Blueberry Maggot after conducting trap surveys in eight counties.
- Collected more than \$19 million in assessment fees paid on 1.16 million acres of cotton by farmers participating in statewide eradication of the Boll Weevil.
- Certified/Inspected 11,535 colonies of honeybees.

Pesticide Program

- Registered 9,858 pesticide products and collected \$1,727,600 in product registration fees.
- Collected 1,122 samples from products available at retail and distribution outlets to spot-check registration numbers and compliance with state and federal pesticide laws.
- Found 53 pesticide products without proper registration while conducting registration spot-checks.
- Issued 48 stop-sale orders on pesticide products found to be deficient, misbranded or not registered.
- Issued 65 special-use registrations (Section 24c of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Issued 8 emergency exemptions (Section 18 of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Licensed 320 dealers to sell restricted-use pesticide products.
- Promoted proper rinsing, disposal and recycling of empty pesticide containers by working with state agencies carrying out recycling programs.
- Collected more than 48,719 pounds of waste pesticide products during one-day disposal event for private and commercial pesticide applicators.
- Issued 835 commercial applicator certificates.
- Issued 3,678 private applicator certificates.

- Made 107 inspections of records kept by private applicators of restricted-use pesticides.
- Conducted 3 producer-establishment inspections, 157 marketplace inspections, 119 inspections of applicator records and 95 inspections of dealer records.
- Conducted 84 inspections of pesticide misuse in agricultural situations and 77 inspections of misuse in non-agricultural situations.
- Conducted 17 informal settlement conferences as part of enforcement actions involving violation of state and federal pesticide laws.
- Collected \$13,554 in fines as part of enforcement actions involving violation of state and federal pesticide laws.
- Issued 77 licenses for aerial application of hormone-type herbicides and approved 121 aircraft used in application of such products.
- Issued 639 licenses to persons receiving fees for performing work related to entomology, plant pathology, horticulture, tree surgery, weed control, consultant services and professional soil classification.
- Conducted 22 civil hearings for violation of pest control regulations.



Seed Program and State Seed Testing Laboratory

- Conducted 356 seed inspections.
- Collected 3,182 official regulatory seed samples.
- Found 148 official regulatory seed samples to be in violation of the State Seed Law.
- Issued 1,266 permits for the sale of seed to be planted.
- Collected \$23,356.88 in fees paid for seed permits.
- Generated \$71,887 in revenues from service charges on farmer and dealer samples.
- Tested 11,636 seed samples.
- Conducted 3,998 special tests on seed.
- Performed a total of 26,662 tests on seed.

Feed, Fertilizer, Lime and Soil-Plant Amendments Program

- Registered 466 companies.
- Registered 2,312 fertilizer products from 322 companies.
- Registered 53 lime products from 122 distributors.
- Issued 921 facility registrations.
- Issued 812 product deficiency penalties.
- Assessed and collected \$22,281 in deficiency penalties.
- Collected \$511,784 in product registration and tonnage fees.
- Conducted 533 inspections of feed, 374 inspections of fertilizer and 179 inspections of lime.
- Inspected 10,085 tons of feed, 22,180 tons of fertilizer and 6,911 tons of lime.



Collected 6,467 feed samples, 1,723 fertilizer samples and 24

Public Information Program

- Produced four issues of quarterly newsletter, Plant Industry Messenger, published by the department.
- Assisted with preparation of information for building dedication plaque honoring Robert H. McCarty and provided news media assistance.
- Secured frame and photo for Edwin Dyess for conference room wall of Bureau of Plant Industry directors.
- Created plant pest exhibit for North Mississippi Garden Exposition at Verona.
- Conducted pesticide safety teaching station for MSU Extension Service Farm Safety Day Camp for sixth graders in Jones and Smith counties.
- Created brochure on pesticide stewardship.
- Designed and produced certified nursery and nursery dealer publication.
- Updated design of private applicator regulation brochure.
- Created registration brochure and cover of cookbook souvenir for the national meeting of the Association of Structural Pest Control Regulatory Officials (ASPCRO).
- Provided photos of district inspectors for new EPA credentials identification and new Bureau staff identification cards.
- Produced more than 50 news articles and photographs for Mississippi Market Bulletin, for general release to news media and professional association newsletters.

Financial Services

- Maintained fleet of 37 passenger vehicles used by staff in performance of work duties.
- Maintained operating costs for state vehicles at average cost-per-mile of 0.081 cents.

CENTRAL FARMERS' MARKET

The Mississippi Central Farmers' Market was created by an Act of the Legislature, House Bill 54 Laws of 1946. The Market was created to provide facilities for the efficient handling of farm products in the interest of the farmer, consumer, general public and the State of Mississippi.



The Central Farmers' Market operates from a "Special Fund Account."

A summary of income sources:

- Three wholesale buildings, two with eight stalls and one with twenty four stalls
- Two wholesale sheds with twenty six stalls used for watermelons and shelling peas
- Two retail sheds with twenty stalls
- Restaurant
- Service station
- Office space
- 114,000 square foot building
- Fees for weighing vehicles and fees for parking vehicles for football games that are played at Mississippi Memorial Stadium

The Central Farmers' Market rents marketing space for seasonal fruit and vegetable farmers in order to sell directly to the consumer. This has increased the annual net profits for the farmers.

The Central Farmers' Market operates a 70ft. heavy truck scale 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Livestock Market News Service

The Livestock and Grain Market News program is a Federal/State cooperative agreement. There is one livestock and grain reporter supervising the dissemination of livestock reports, collection and disseminating grain price information, voicing radio and Television broadcasts to 75 radio stations and 1 Television Station informing the agriculture community of livestock prices.

This office provides price information on livestock and grain to lending institutions, University Agricultural Economist, Consultants and Livestock Associations. A livestock report is issued in the Mississippi Market Bulletin that has a circulation of 912,000 readers per year.

Fifteen Livestock Auction markets are reported by nine cross-trained Mississippi Board of Animal Health personnel, which will reduce the total cost of the section. Prices collected from these 15 sales by crossed-trained animal health inspectors represent 85% of all the livestock marketed through all auction markets in the State.

Cash receipts realized by Mississippi producers and farmers for cattle and calves in 2002 was 193 million dollars and 469 million dollars for the grain. Livestock and grain market reports assist producers and farmers in making marketing decisions to add value to their commodity.



Fruit and Vegetables

The Fruit and Vegetable Division consists of one (1) federal-state inspector collaborator, four (4) marketing specialist, one (1) fruit and vegetable inspector, one (1) person who operates the revolving fund and a shed manager at Bassfield. These people work with the farmers's year-round, from planting to the sale of the produce. The inspectors inspect fruits and vegetables that are shipped. The marking specialists help farmers sell their produce.

The Legislature has set up a revolving fund for fruits and vegetables. This fund will pay farmers for their produce after the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce office at Bassfield gets a signed receipt from the buyer. This allows the farmer to receive payment about two or three weeks before produce companies pay for the produce. This has been a big help to farmers. The Fruit and Vegetable Division has a part-time person who works with the productions and sale of fruits.

The "Farm to the School Program" is something new that MDAC is doing with the Mississippi Board of Education and the U.S. Department of Defense. The Department of Defense, through the school system, purchases fruits and vegetables to go into the school cafeteria system. This will bring new guaranteed markets for our growers. This will allow our growers to plant fall crops that they in the past have not had a guaranteed market for. This is not only a good program for the Mississippi growers but also for the children eating in the cafeterias.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce has made application to the USDA National Organic Program. Once we receive our certification, it will allow us to help Mississippi growers become Certified Organic Growers.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Information Management 2002 Accomplishments

The Information Management Division (IMD) is primarily responsible for providing information technology and services to all employees of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. IMD plays a critical role in (a) aligning information technology with the agency's business goals, (b) providing the infrastructure resources to support the agency communication and decision making, and (c) exploring emerging technologies to promote agriculture and commerce in the state.

The Information Management Division successfully accomplished the following projects during the last fiscal year:

- Implemented three new computer servers and a storage area network using cluster technology reducing network down time and increasing efficiency of information storage.
- Trained the Information Management technical staff in network management, web based applications development, telecommunications, computer security, and project management.
- Upgraded both the Internet web server and fixed asset management system.
- Designed and implemented a web based West Nile Virus reporting system for the Mississippi Board of Animal Health. The system provides up-to-date information on the virus infection among livestock in the state.
- Implemented a wireless communication network between the Mississippi Fair Commission facilities and the main office in Jackson. The new wireless network provides faster access for computer users and saves approximately \$7,800 annually.



- Configured and implemented 40 laptop computers and printers for both the Mississippi Board of Animal Health and the Agricultural Theft Bureau. Trained the field staff in the use of email, Internet, and office automation.
- Designed and implemented a field-based case management database system for the Agricultural Theft Bureau. Today, the investigators communicate via e-mail and submit crime reports electronically to the Jackson office.
- Led the National Association of State Agriculture Technology Officials (NASATO) organization. The Information Management Director was elected to serve as the President of NASATO.

MARKETING DEVELOPMENT

Agriculture is Mississippi's number one industry, employing approximately 30% of the state's workforce either directly or indirectly. Agriculture in Mississippi is a 4.5 billion-dollar industry. There are approximately 42,000 farms in the state covering 11 million acres. Agriculture makes a significant contribution to all 82 counties. The Market Development Division is dedicated to promoting and heightening the public's awareness of Mississippi's agriculture commodities and the farmers and ranchers who produce them.



Agriculture Awareness

- Presented agriculture's message to 30 school and civic organizations
- Participated in 15 conferences and festivals in Mississippi
- Conducted 20 agriculture-related promotions at the State Capitol during the Legislative Session
- Distributed thousands of recipes using products grown in Mississippi
- Counseled with companies and producers

Aquaculture

- Conducted 30 inspections to permitted aquaculture farms
- Renewed 74 aquaculture permits
- Issued 5 new aquaculture permits

International Trade

- Member of the Southern United States Trade Association, encompassing 16 southern states whose mission is to increase exports for United States agriculture and high value foods.

- Department conducted tours and gave presentations to more than 100 international visitors
- Counseled individuals and associations on export opportunities
- The Market Development Division works closely with the International Trade Clubs of Mississippi and the Mississippi District Export Council

Public Information



Since 1917, the farming community throughout Mississippi has had access to one of the most important farming tools there is, the Mississippi Market Bulletin. The Mississippi Market Bulletin is a buy/sell newspaper for farmers to advertise their agricultural items that have been raised, grown, produced or operated

on their farms. It is the best source for information regarding: machinery/equipment, livestock, plants/seeds, agricultural real-estate, etc., anything related to Mississippi agriculture. It provides a wealth of information delivered to farmers' doors 24 times a year. The Mississippi Market Bulletin is a semi-monthly publication, published on the 1st and 15th of each month. Its circulation of 38,500 subscribers is not limited to in-state residents but goes to out-of-state residents as well.

- Information to the media statewide on all important agricultural events
- An agricultural commodity directory distributed statewide and located on the web at www.mdac.state.ms.us
- A directory of agricultural manufacturers and exporters
- A fruit and vegetable guide

Trade Shows, Conferences, and Fairs



- Mississippi State Fair
- Commodity Food Tent at State Fair
- Fish Farming Trade Show
- Bay Springs Field Day
- Garden and Patio Show
- National Association of State Aquaculture Coordinators Conference, Maine
- North American Agricultural Marketing Officers Conference, Maryland
- Dixie National Rodeo and Parade
- Tupelo Furniture Market
- Mississippi Market
- Distributed 4,000 calendars promoting agriculture in Mississippi

Organic Certification Program

In 2001, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce made application to the USDA National Organic Program in order to be able to certify farmers. The USDA will announce in April 2002, the states, as well as independent inspectors, that will be able to certify growers as organic farmers. In February 2001, a statewide organic meeting was held in conjunction with the ARK/LA/MS Fruit & Vegetable Conference and Trade Show. Once MDAC can start inspecting Mississippi farms for certification, we feel this will be a profitable program.

- Make Mine Mississippi – This unique marketing program was created to highlight products 51% produced, manufactured or enhanced here in Mississippi. Using a logo to identify these Mississippi value added products, the program has heightened consumer awareness about the quality and availability of Mississippi products.
- Legislation was passed in April 1999, providing the foundation for Make Mine Mississippi. At the end of FY 2002, 694 companies across the state belonged to the program. Funding secured for the Cooperative Promotions Reimbursement Program in November 1999, has been a major benefit to members. Using this program, members have increased sales and helped their business grow, adding to the economy of our state.
- One hundred thirty two companies across most of the product categories were allocated funding.
- A total of \$170,000 was awarded.
- The companies reported \$18,117,549 in sales as a result of the promotional activities paid for in part by this program.
- Businesses are currently reporting some 791 new jobs created as a result of the Make Mine Mississippi program.
- For every dollar spent on this program, \$106 in sales was generated as a result of



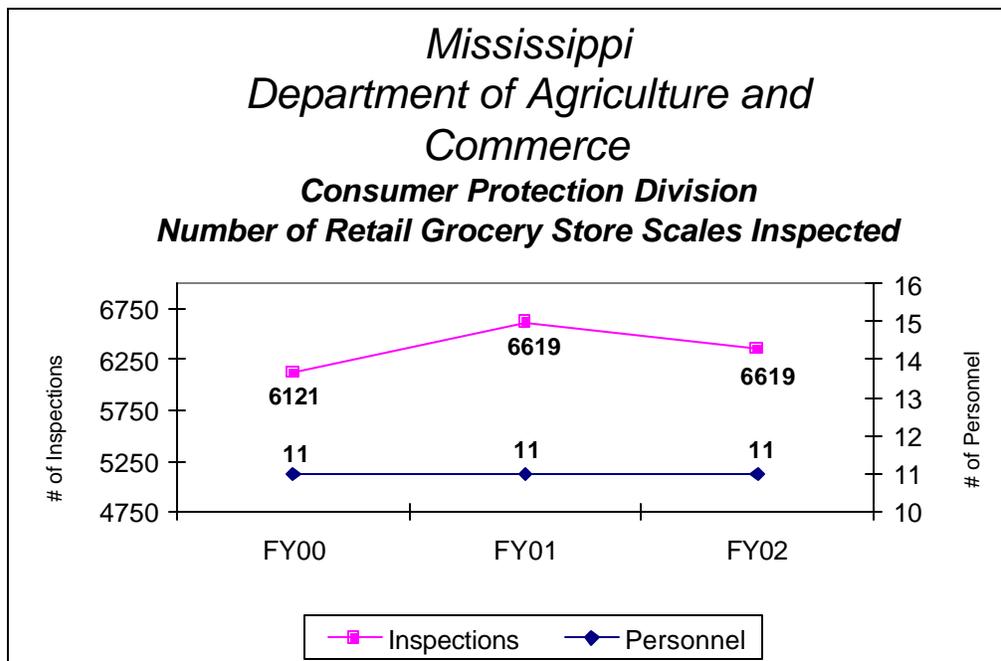
REGULATORY SERVICES



Consumer Protection

The mission of the Consumer Protection Division is to ensure food quality, fairness and equity in the marketplace through the enforcement of certain laws and regulations designed to primarily in the interest of the general public.

In FY2002, the division continued improvement in efficiency. The chart below represents increased inspection activity, from FY1999, with no additional personnel.



Legal complaints were issued to four retail food establishments for critical violations cited under the Mississippi Food Sanitation Law. A total of \$1000.00 in civil penalties were issued for these violations.

During the latter part of June, the division implemented a program of pulling samples of raw unprocessed fresh or frozen shrimp in retail food establishments. This was conducted to test for Chloramphenicol, an antibiotic that has been banned by the US Food and Drug Administration in food producing animals.

The numbers below also give an idea of the scope of our responsibilities:

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| ➤ Retail store inspections | 4,993 |
| ➤ Pre-packaged items weighed | 34,034 (9.8% rejected) |
| ➤ Cases of shell eggs inspected | 48,244 |
| ➤ Scales tested (100 pound or less) | 6,357 (3.7% rejected) |
| ➤ Catfish product label inspections | 2,981 |
| ➤ Syrup product label inspections | 3,158 |
| ➤ Honey product label inspections | 3,146 |
| ➤ Meat compliance inspections | 3,654 |
| ➤ Sanitation inspections | 3,022 |
| ➤ Disposition of garbage store inspections | 2,666 |
| ➤ UPC price verification inspections | 389 |



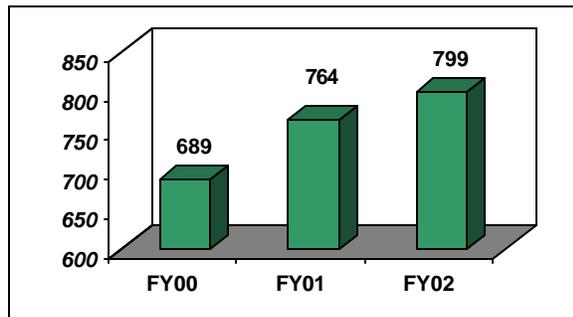
The division has increased efficiency both in the field and the office through the use of laptop computers for the field inspection staff and the WinWam software inspection program. We strive to continue to have a good working relationship with other state and federal agencies, as well as other divisions of the department, in a cooperative effort on matters of mutual concern to help achieve our goals.

Grain Inspection

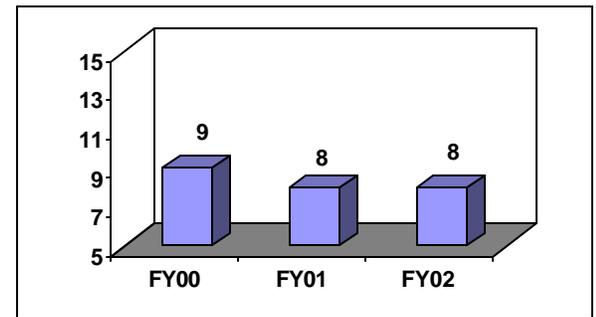
The Grain Inspection and Weighing Division facilitates the orderly marketing of grain and related agriculture products. It also promotes fair and competitive tracking practices for the overall benefit of consumers and the Mississippi Grain Industry.

Inclimate weather during harvest caused higher than normal damaged kernel count resulting in grading time increasing double or triple fold. This caused a rise in the number of samples submitted and the time required to grade them.

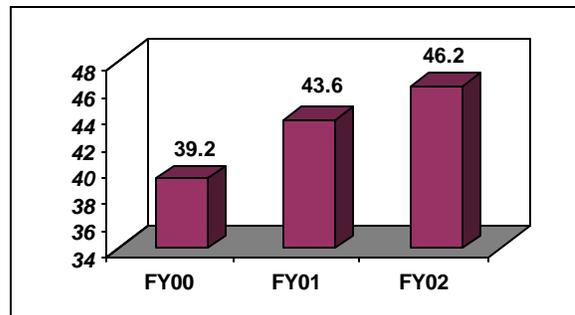
Number of Barges Inspected



Personnel



Bushels Graded (Millions)



Other points of interest from the division in 2002 include:

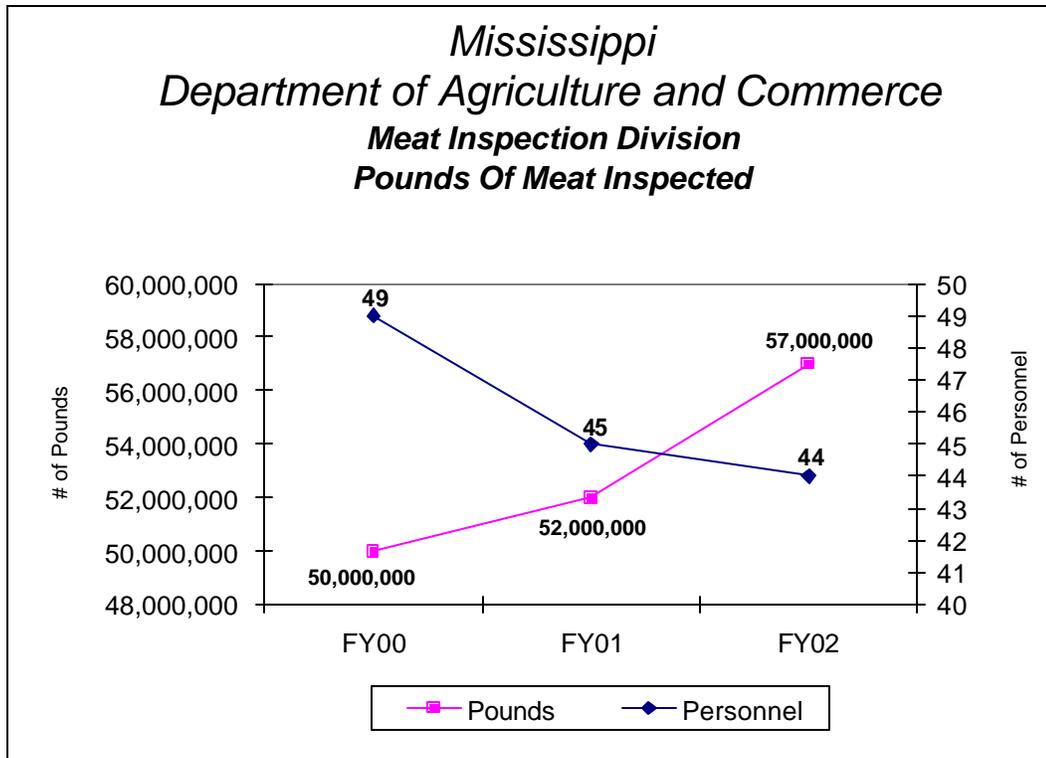
- Total fees collected \$283,238
- Submitted samples 3,129
- Truck inspected 484

Meat Inspection

The Meat Inspection Division provides food safety assurance to meat and poultry food consumers. This is done by providing inspection service to establishments that prepare meat and poultry food products for entry into intrastate commerce and to some establishments that engage in interstate commerce. This assurance becomes more critical as more and more of the products that are produced are intended to be consumed with little or no further preparation. Products that are either ready to eat (cold cuts, jerky, sausages, etc.) or intended only to be heated and served (refrigerated/frozen entrees, prepared pizzas, etc.) fall into these categories.

The Meat Inspection Division continues to increase productivity by taking advantage of newly developing technology. There is a new electronic version of the existing inspection system. This system has been installed in approximately 40% of the computers that field personnel use in performing their inspection duties. The remaining 60% of the computers are scheduled to have this system installed within the next year. This system will electronically schedule work, receive and transfers inspection findings, file, and store the associated information and retrieve it for supervisory and administrative use. This will result in savings in supplies, postage, and time and allow this division to concentrate more of its resources toward food safety for the consumers.





Here are some numbers that give you an idea about the scope of our division.

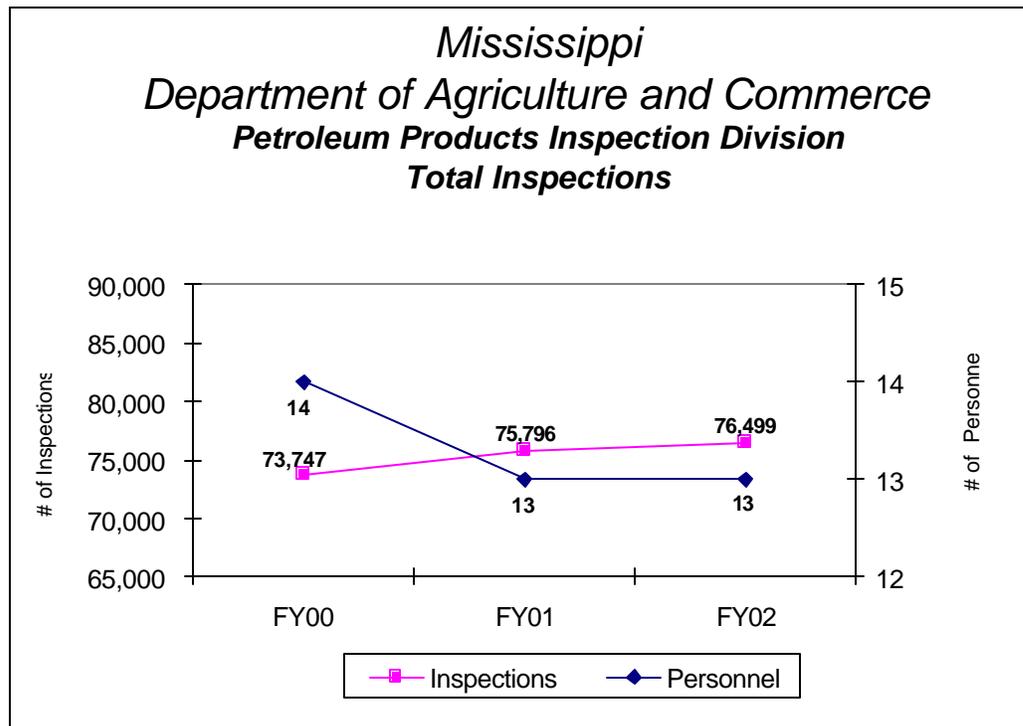
- Pounds of red meat inspected 57,456,954
- Pounds of poultry inspected 6,547,218
- Number of animals inspected 73,782
- Number of ratites inspected 97
- Number of state meat plants licenses issued 54
- Number of T/A plants (no state license required) 21

The meat Inspection Division is moving from organoleptic to more and newly evolving scientific methods of assessing the effectiveness of food safety systems. This division is constantly developing and implementing new scientific advancements in food safety. One of the new advancements in food safety is that all materials that are used in the production of raw beef products must have gone through scientifically validated interventions that are proven effective in reducing the occurrence of the pathogen E.Coli 0157:H7 to an undetected level. These interventions are one example of how changes in methods of meat inspection are providing new levels of safety to the meat food products that the public consumes.

Petroleum Products

Retail motor fuel dispensers are inspected by the Petroleum Products Inspection Division to insure fuel quantity and samples are obtained by the division to insure fuel quality. Not only does the division conduct routine random inspections but the division also investigates consumer complaints. Inspections were conducted at the 3,681 locations registered in the state. Penalties were collected from one local distributor and one out of state distributor for failure to meet state specifications in regard to fuel quality.

The Petroleum Products Inspection Division inspectors have been using the trailer manufactured in FY01 to check bulk plants and high flow dispensers. The division is awaiting approval of the purchase of a slide-in unit that will further assist inspectors by allowing them to check 64 nozzles at a location before returning fuel to storage tanks. The division has also continued to increase the number of samples obtained with the help of the Zeltex octane testers.



Not charted are statistics giving a general idea of penalties and violations issued by The Petroleum Products Inspection Division.

| | |
|---|--------|
| ➤ Stations registered | 3,681 |
| ➤ Petroleum pumps tested | 76,499 |
| ➤ Petroleum products sampled | 5,667 |
| ➤ Violations issued | 1,610 |
| ➤ Stop sales for fuel violation | 141 |
| ➤ Stop sales for calibration violations | 145 |
| ➤ Stop sales for sign violations | 17 |
| ➤ Stop sales for water violations | 46 |

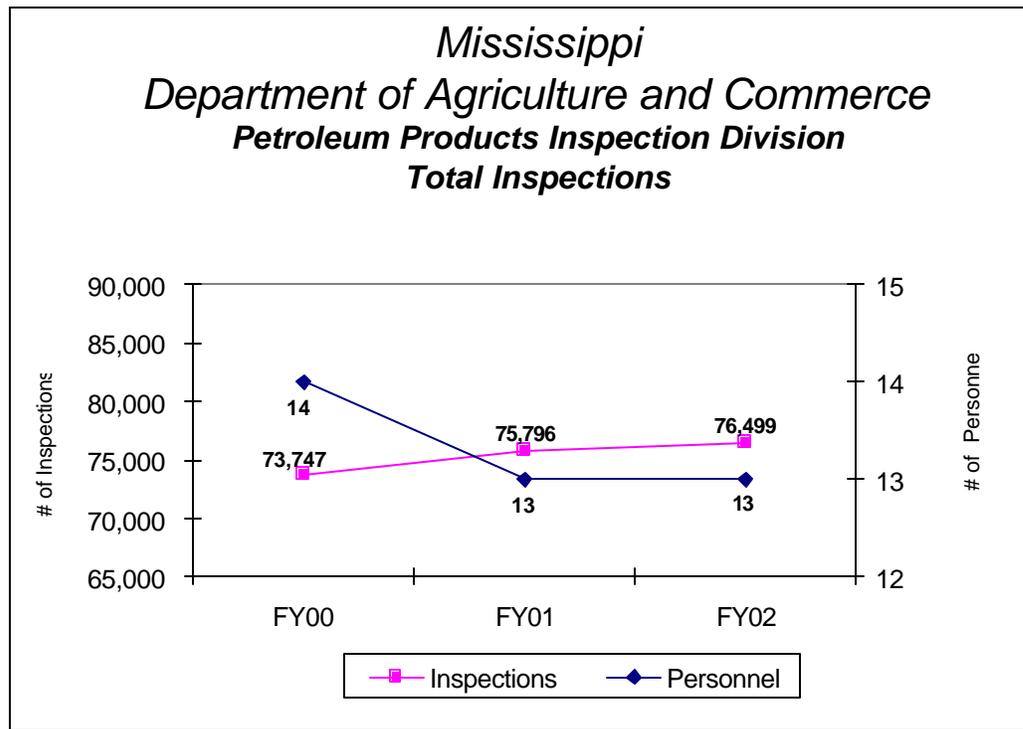
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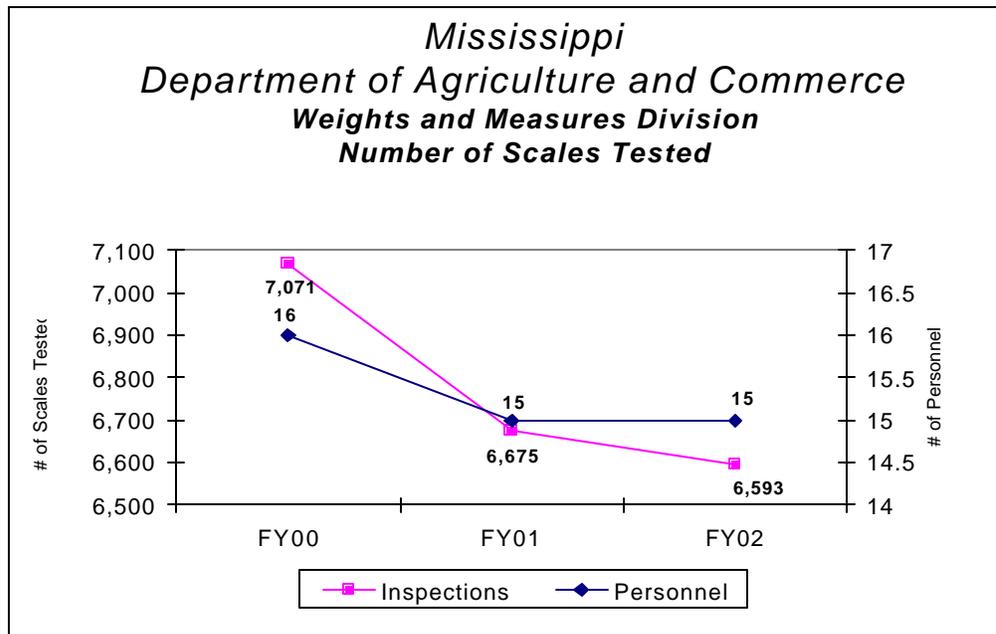


Weights and Measures

The Weights and Measures Division is charged with the calibration and testing of all large and intermediate scales and measurement equipment used in commerce and trade and the regulation of pulpwood receiving facilities, sawmills and public weighmasters. In addition, the division provides training to inspectors on laws, rules and regulations administered by the division, emphasizing how enforcement is to be used to better serve the citizens of Mississippi.

The following were important accomplishments for this division for 2002:

- Two new Volumetric Provors for Metrology Lab
- New electric balances for Metrology Lab
- Hired new Metrologist and sent to school

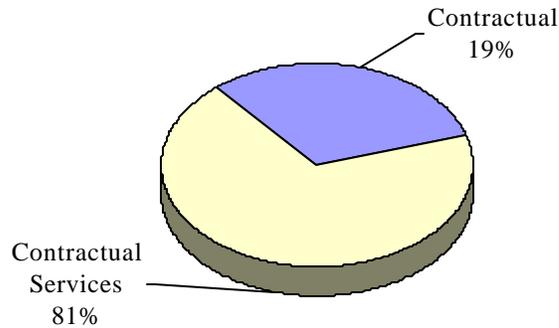


- Pounds of feed, seed and fertilizer weighed * 31,924
- Pounds placed off-sale for short weight ** 118,780
- Heavy scales tested 1,655
- Heavy scales rejected 279
- Intermediate scales tested 3,596
- Intermediate scales rejected 231
- All other inspections 1,342

* Based on a 10% sample of each lot.

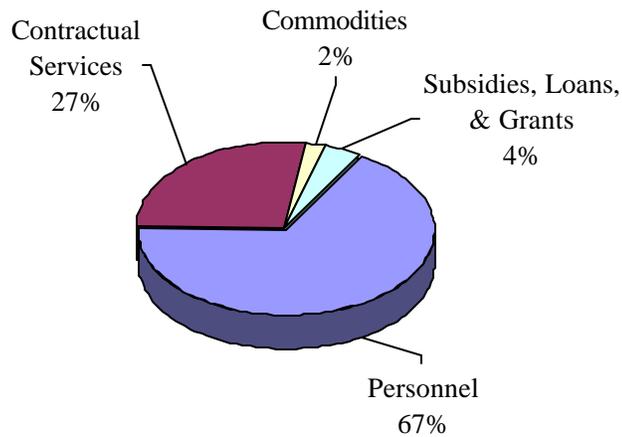
** If product is short weight, whole lot off sale.

*Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce
Program Budget for FY02*



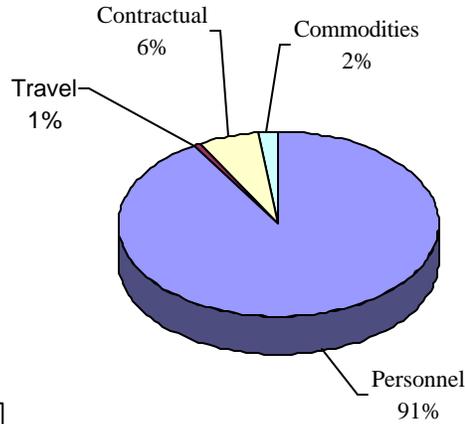
| | |
|--------------------|----------|
| Total Revenues | \$48,027 |
| Total Expenditures | \$67,446 |

Egg Marketing Board - Special Funds



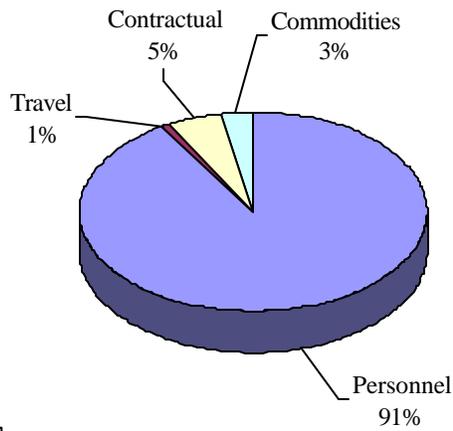
| | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Total Revenues | \$346,485 |
| Total Expenditures | \$361,904 |

Farmers' Central Market - Special Funds



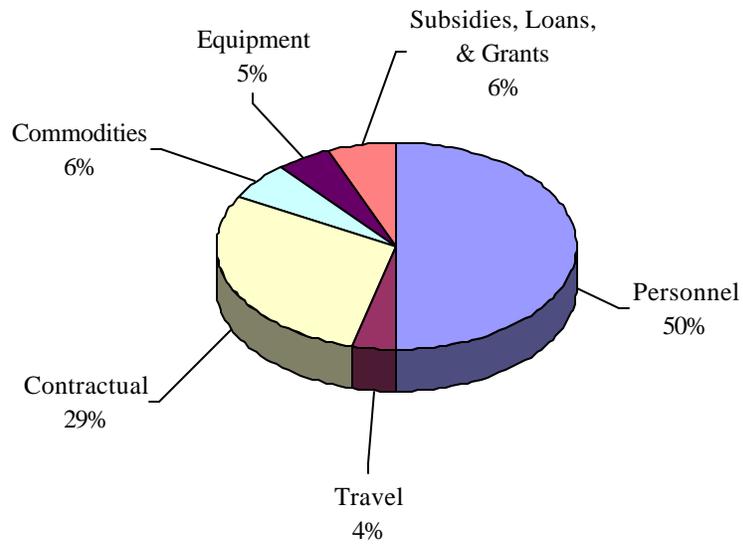
| | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Total General Fund | |
| Appropriations | \$379,541 |
| Total Expenditures | \$374,822 |

Grain Division - General Funds



| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Revenue | \$1,377,751 |
| Total Expenditures | \$1,377,751 |

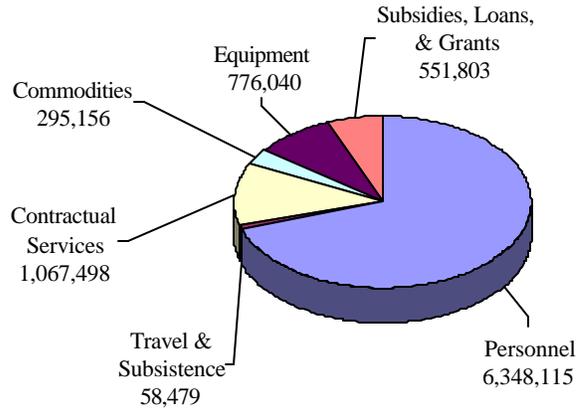
BPI - General Funds



| | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Revenue | \$1,584,939 |
| Total Expenditures | \$1,370,786 |

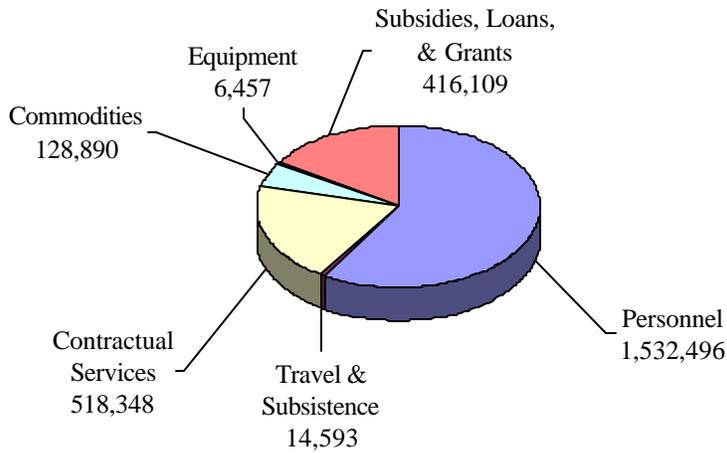
BPI - Special Funds

*Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce
Support Budget for FY02*



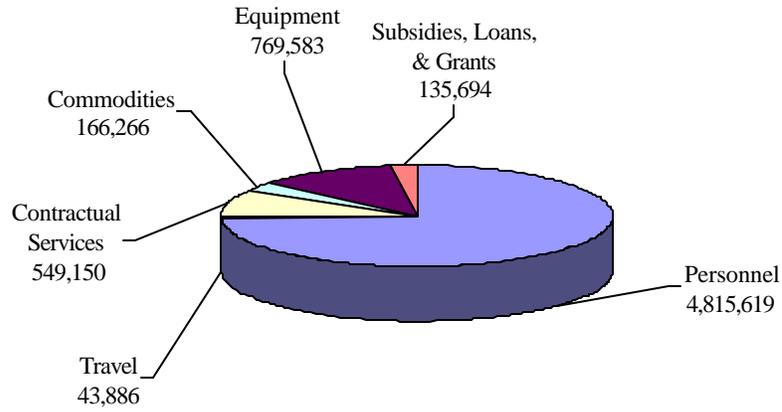
| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Total General Fund Appropriations Revenue | \$11,400,345 |
| Total Expenditures | \$9,097,091 |

General & Special Funds



| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Total Revenue | \$3,120,148 |
| Total Expenditures | \$2,616,893 |

Special Funds Only



| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Total General Fund | |
| Appropriations | \$8,280,197 |
| Total Expenditures | \$6,480,198 |

General Fund Only