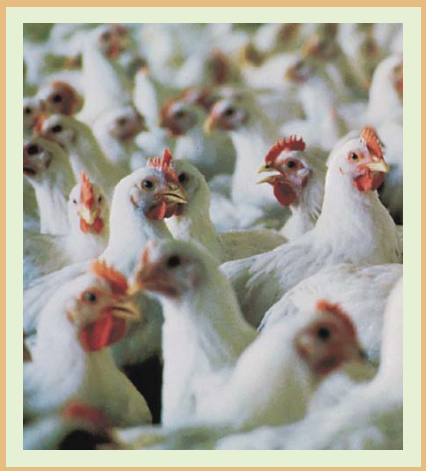
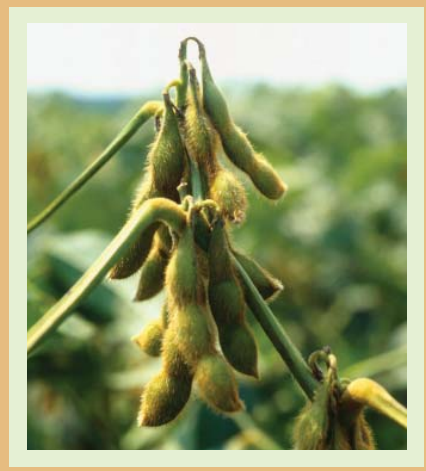
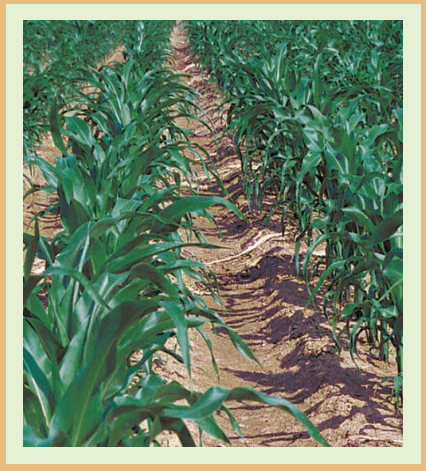
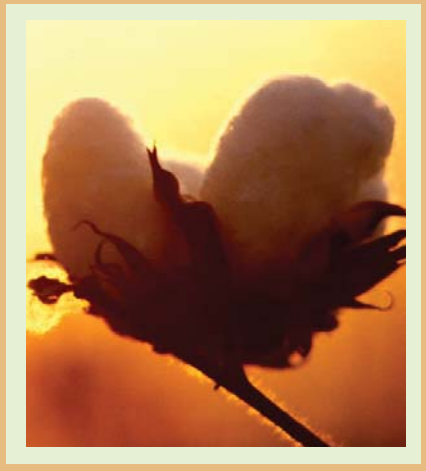
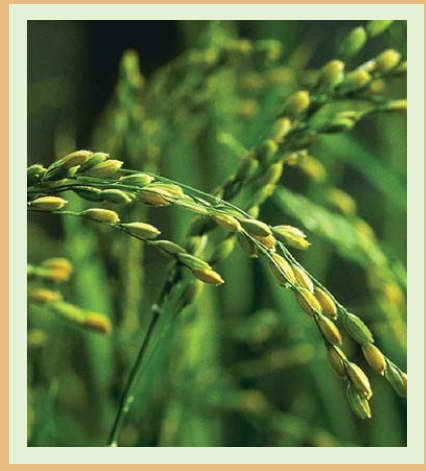
2010 Annual Report

Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce

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

Fiscal Year 2010



Administration

Lester Spell, Jr., D.V.M. - Commissoner

Rickey Gray - Deputy Commissoner

Butch Aple - BPI Director

Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce

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Letter from your Commissioner

Lester Spell, Jr, D.V.M Commissioner

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. 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 1,037 companies have met the criteria, registered, and received official promotional assistance. Also, the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*, published by the Department with 47,400 subscribers, provides a venue for consumer and vendor contact as well as highlighting the diversity of Mississippi's agriculture base.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce's regulatory responsibilities extend from farm to marketplace. In addition to 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, certification of gasoline pumps, and verification of weights and measures at scales.

In cooperation with the Mississippi Department of Health and the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), the MDAC assists with the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Program. This program makes fresh fruits and vegetables available to some low-income and nutritionally at-risk citizens. Through the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, the lives of these participants are enhanced, and the economic well being of small farmers is helped.

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

- Mississippi Board of Animal Health
- Mississippi Central Farmers Market Board
- Mississippi Fair Commission
- Mississippi LWT Resources Board
- 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 achieved through the joint efforts of State and Federal agencies, the Mississippi Legislature, and a sincerely dedicated staff.

Sincerely,

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

Commissioner

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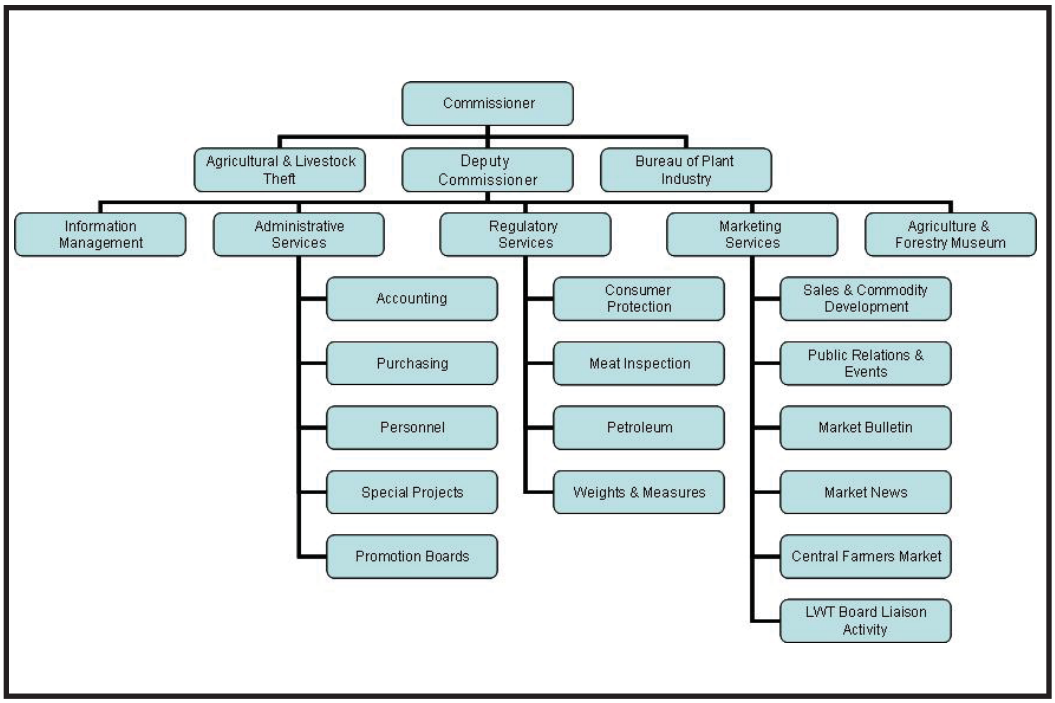
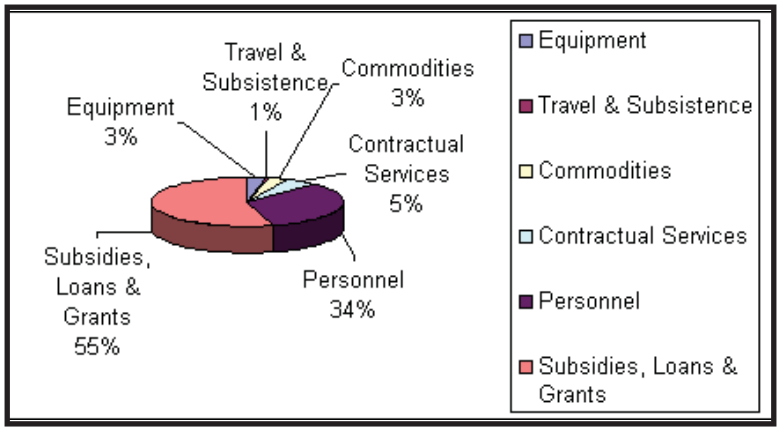
Administration & Charts

In 2010, the number of personnel remained stable; however, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce assumed additional responsibilities, as well as, implemented new programs to protect the Mississippi consumer. All of this was done with 33% fewer personnel than in 1996, when Lester Spell assumed the leadership of the agency. The agency has been able to accomplish this by upgrading its technology, as well as, crosstraining its employees.

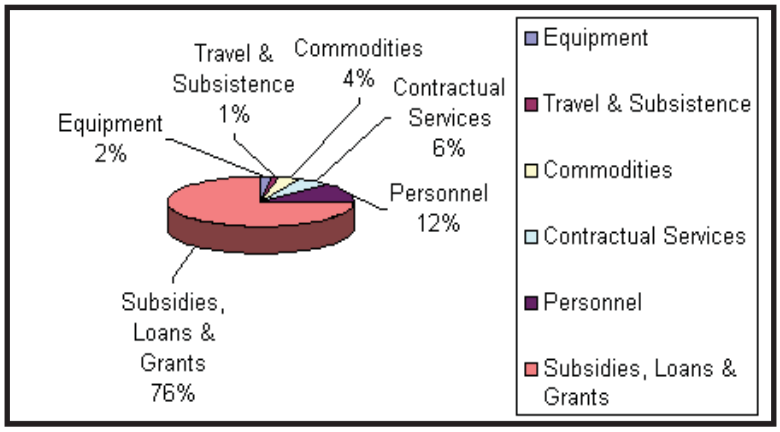


Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce
Organization Chart



MDAC Support Budget
General and Special Funds FY 2010

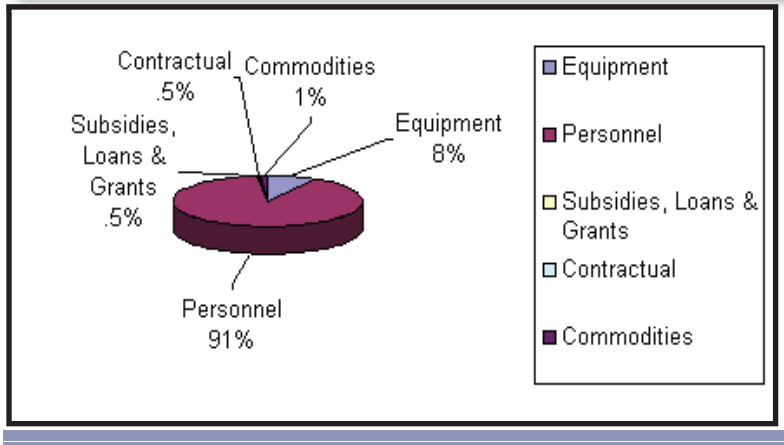
Total Revenues	**$34,818,169**
Total Expenditures	**$30,462,617**



Special Funds Only

Total Revenues	**$26,350,827**
Total Expenditures	**$21,995,275**

Administration & Charts, *continued from page 3*



General Fund Only	
Total Revenues	$8,467,342
Total Expenditures	$8,467,342

Central Farmers Market

Farmers Market located off High Street in Downtown Jackson.

The Mississippi Farmers Market was created by an Act of 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.

In February of 2006, the Farmers Market moved to the new 18,000 square foot market facility located at the corner of Jefferson and High Street.

The Market rents space to seasonal fruit and vegetable farmers, specialty food vendors, and artisans from across the state and provides a place of business where consumers can buy products directly from the growers or producers. The Market also rents the facility for private parties and events when the facility is not being used for Farmers Market activities.

On average, the Market serves over 100 businesses across the state including farmers, specialty food vendors, and artisans. From February to December the Mississippi Farmers Market has an estimated average of nearly 1,200 customers each week with over 2,000 customers shopping each week during the peak months of the summer vegetable season.

The Farmers Market Grill, located inside the Mississippi Farmers Market, rents space from the Market and serves breakfast and lunch six days a week.

The Mississippi Farmers Market operates from a "Special Fund Account." A summary of income sources is the following:

- Booth/Stall rentals
- Restaurant facility rental
- General facility rental

Fruits and Vegetables

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce has a Fruits and Vegetables Division. This division's purpose is to assist our fruit and vegetable growers with planting, marketing, or any problems encountered by the growers.

MDAC has three fruits and vegetables drop points in Mississippi, which are located in Bassfield, Booneville, and Lucedale. The purpose of these drop points is to give growers a local contact with which to work. The revolving fund, managed in Bassfield, is a $1.9 million fund set up to give our growers fast pay when they sell their products. After Bassfield receives the Bill of Lading confirming the buyer's acceptance of the shipment, a Mississippi grower is paid from this fund within five days. The buyer then pays MDAC instead of paying the grower. Each grower and buyer must sign an acknowledgement with MDAC stating their understanding of the terms and regulations of MDAC's Revolving Fund.

A new and exciting program that MDAC is participating in is the Farm to School Program. This program is run by the Department of Defense, which for years bought produce from local growers for military bases. The DOD recently expanded the Farm to School Program to include the school systems. MDAC works very closely with the Mississippi Public School Nutritional Purchasing Agent, who receives all orders from the state's schools for produce needed for school cafeterias. MDAC then finds growers to supply the school system with the required fruits and vegetables. The first year MDAC participated in this program it created more than a $330,000 new market for Mississippi growers. Our growers now have an additional market, and school children are being introduced to locally-grown fruits and vegetables.

Organic Certification Program

In 2004, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce was granted its certification that allows for farmers to be certified as organic growers. There are currently six trained inspectors, one state director, and one state coordinator. To date, Mississippi has 22 certified organic growers and three certified packing lines. Mississippi has become one of the largest shippers of organic blueberries in the nation.

Andy Prosser, Director

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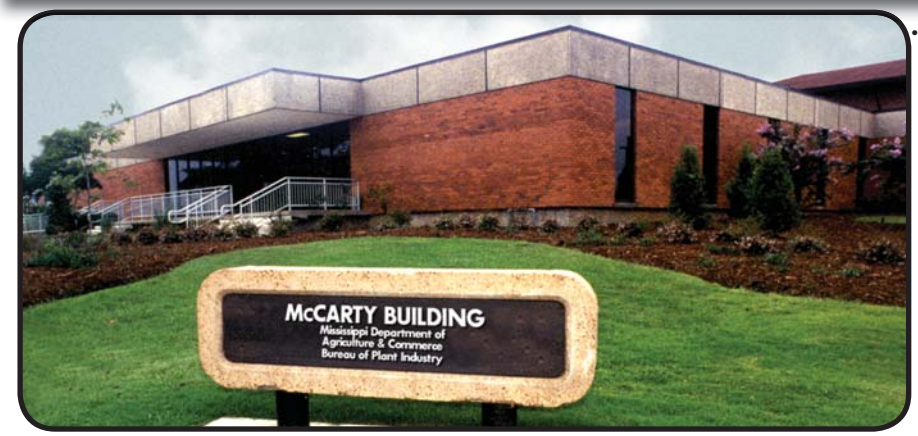
Bureau of Plant Industry



BPI front entrance in Starkville, Mississippi

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 agricultural aviation, pesticides, plant pests, honey bees, seed, animal feed, fertilizer, lime, and soil/plant amendments. Additionally, it 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.

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, Lime, and Soil/Plant Amendments Division was placed under the administration of the Bureau.

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 69-19-15
- Agricultural Aviation Law of 2009, Sections 69-21-101 through 69-21-128.
- 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 69-23-135
- 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 69-37-41
- 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 the administration and enforcement of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.

Plant Pest Program

- Conducted 633 nursery inspections and 566 nursery dealer inspections.
- Conducted 121 inspections for Brown Garden Snail on plant materials shipped from California.
- Certified and inspected 57,127 colonies of honey bees.
- Permitted 59,597 bee colonies into Mississippi.
- Issued 339 phytosanitary certificates on plant material and seed export.
- Found no Sweet Potato Weevils after setting 1,978 traps on 18,520 acres of sweet potatoes.
- Conducted Cogongrass demonstration program for 840 private land owners. 5,707 acres were treated in the program.
- Collected assessment fees on 408,526 acres of cotton by farmers participating in statewide eradication of the Boll Weevil.
- Issued 57 landscape horticulturist licenses.
- Issued 17 tree surgery licenses.
- Conducted 1,336 visual surveys statewide at nurseries and nursery dealers for Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Chrysanthemum White Rust, Viburnum Leaf Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, Giant African Snail, Cactus Moth, and Asian Longhorned Beetle. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 215 visual surveys in 32 counties at soybean production fields for Maritime Garden Snail, Soybean Pod Borer, Chilli Thrips, Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Yellow Witchweed, and Benghal Dayflower. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 465 visual surveys in 10 counties at cotton production fields for Giant African Snail, Cotton Seed Bug, Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Egyptian Broomrape, and Benghal Dayflower. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 125 visual surveys in 8 counties at rice production fields for Bacterial Leaf Streak of Rice. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 410 visual surveys statewide in pastures and livestock facilities for the noxious weed, Tropical Soda Apple. 63 positive sites were found.
- Conducted 1,928 visual surveys statewide in nurseries, nursery dealers, and the environment for the noxious weed, Giant Salvinia. 1 positive site found.
- Conducted 2,090 visual surveys statewide in nurseries and croplands for the noxious weed, Benghal Dayflower. 42 positive sites were found.
- Conducted 1,366 visual surveys statewide in nurseries, nursery dealers, and the environment for the noxious weed, Cogongrass. 66 counties were found to be positive.
- Placed 348 traps in 45 counties at high risk nursery and nursery dealer sites for the Light Brown Apple Moth. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 6 traps in 6 counties at lumber mills and furniture manufactures for the Sirex Woodwasp. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 50 traps in 23 counties on ash trees for the Emerald Ash Borer. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 1,450 traps in 58 counties at high risk sites for the European Gypsy Moth. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 41 traps in 4 counties at high risk sites for Japanese Pine Sawyer Beetle, Redhaired Pine Bark Beetle, Pine Shoot Beetle, and 2 Ambrosia Beetles. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 67 traps in 10 counties at high risk sites for Africanized Honey Bee. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 37 traps in 15 counties at soybean production fields for the Chilli Thrip. All traps were found to be negative.
- Assisted USDA-APHIS-PPQ in conducting herbicide spot treatment applications for Tropical Soda Apple in 13 counties covering approxi-

mately 19,000 acres.

- Assisted USDA-APHIS-PPQ and USDA-FS in the monitoring of a Sudden Oak Death positive nursery and the bordering forestland for the pathogen.

BPI Inspector Places Gypsy Moth Trap

Pesticide Program

- Registered 12,599 pesticide products.
- Collected 535 samples from products available at retail and distribution outlets to check compliance with state and federal pesticide laws.
- Issued 5 stop-sale orders on pesticide products found to be deficient, misbranded, or not registered.
- Issued 64 special-use registrations (Section 24c of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Issued 4 emergency exemptions (Section 18 of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Licensed 276 dealers to sell restricted-use pesticide products.
- Issued 1,926 private applicator certificates.
- Issued 3,057 commercial applicator certificates.
- Made 188 inspections of records kept by private applicators of restricted-use pesticide.
- Conducted 49 producer-establishment inspections, 215 marketplace inspections, 197 inspections of applicator records, and 106 inspections of dealer records.
- Conducted 39 inspections of pesticide misuse in agricultural situations and 27 inspections of misuse in nonagricultural situations.
- Collected 102 samples under the Pesticide Enforcement Program.
- Conducted 56 worker protection inspections.
- Licensed 223 agricultural aviation pilots.
- Registered 179 aircraft for agricultural purposes.
- Collected 29,892 pounds of waste pesticide.
- Issued 203 pest management consultants licenses.
- Issued 15 soil classifier licenses.

Seed Program and State Seed Testing Laboratory

- Conducted 260 seed inspections.
- Collected 2,380 official regulatory seed samples.
- Found 173 official regulatory seed samples to be in violation of the State Seed Law.
- Issued 1,624 permits for the sale of seed to be planted.
- Tested 13,572 seed samples.
- Conducted 4,521 special tests on seed such as cool germ test, accelerated aging on soybeans, and red rice test.
- Performed a total of 26,222 tests on seed.
- Received 3 applications for seed inspection fees.

Seed Analyst Determines Germination Percentage of Cotton Seed

Feed, Fertilizer, Lime and Soil-Plant Amendments Program

- Registered 642 feed manufacturers.
- Collected 3,964 feed samples.
- Registered 2,787 fertilizer products from 371 fertilizer companies.
- Registered 81 lime products from 53 distributors.
- Collected 1,005 fertilizer samples.
- Collected 16 lime samples.

Public Information Program

- Produced the September 2009, December 2009, March 2010, and June 2010 quarterly newsletter, *Plant Industry News*.
- Issued the following five press releases: Disease Killing Redbay Trees Makes First Appearance in Mississippi, Lucedale Farmers Produce First Certified Peanut Seed in Mississippi, MDAC Announces Annual Beekeeping Workshops this Spring, Section 18 Exemptions for Corn Seed Treatments Announced, High Winds a Cause of Concern for Farmers.
- Conducted pesticide and chemical safety training sessions at the 2009 Leake County Safety Expo, 2009 Jasper and Smith County Safety Days, and 2009 Safety Town in Oktibbeha County.
- Provided exhibit and educational materials at the 2009 Fall Flower and Garden Fest in Crystal Springs, 2010 Everything Garden Expo in Starkville, 2010 New Albany Home and Garden Show in New Albany, and 2010 Mississippi Women in Agriculture Conference in Starkville.

Butch Alpe, Bureau Director

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Information Management

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 (MDAC). Also, IMD provides technical and network support, applications development and systems support, and strategic planning services for both the Mississippi Board of Animal Health and the Mississippi State Fair Commission.

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's communications and decision making, and (c) exploring emerging technologies to promote agriculture and commerce in the state.

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

- Successfully migrated over 200 network user accounts from Novell Server to Microsoft Windows Server System; converted email accounts and transferred files, folders, documents, contacts, and calendar information with 99.99 percent accuracy; and conducted educational briefings, prepared handout instructions for network users, and completed the project on schedule and within budget. The agency will realize a total cost savings of $60,000 in annual maintenance over the next five year period. Additionally, this will allow the agency to be compatible with a larger number of third party software.

- Implemented virtualization technology and consolidated 13 physical machines to 3 virtual host servers resulting in significant cost savings and benefits. Some of the benefits included reducing investment by buying fewer machines and fewer server licenses thus decreasing annual operating costs. Also, other benefits included reducing maintenance /repair frequency of Computer Room A/C unit and cutting operating costs in terms of electricity usage required in cooling computer room with less BTU generated from fewer servers.

- Successfully implemented agency's first E-Commerce application, *Mississippi Market Bulletin* Subscription System, to allow the citizens 24/7 to use a credit card over the Internet to purchase the *Market Bulletin* subscriptions. Agency now receives and processes 22 percent of all transactions in credit card payments over the Internet, including new and renewal subscriptions. This also resulted in increased efficiency and productivity by not having to process those payments manually during this period. Also, over 50 percent of *Market Bulletin* advertisements are now submitted online over the Internet vs. Fax, and US Mail.

- Designed and implemented a new website for Mississippi Cooperative Weed Management Area (MSCWMA). This project was a result of an interagency initiative with over 40 governmental and private organizations. After the implementation and training phase, management of the website was turned over to MSCWMA organization.

- Implemented a database management system to track financial information and distribution of over $7 million in aquaculture grants to 210 producers. The system calculated and determined the payment distribution formula and generated audit reports for both state and federal government.

Umesh Sanjanwala , Director

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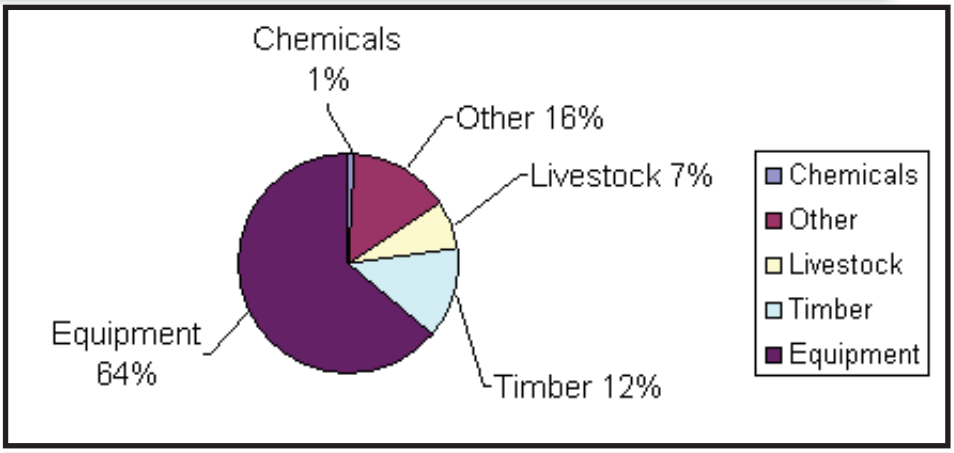
Agriculture and Livestock Theft



Percentage Distribution of Dollar Value of Reported Crimes

Total Dollar Value of $2,670,483 for FY2010

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 the theft of cattle, horses, swine, poultry, fish, farm equipment, 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 Agriculture 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-year period at a cost of five dollars. Registered brands are published in book form and distributed to law enforcement throughout the state. Presently, about 1,100 active brands are on file.

This past fiscal year saw the completion of a six month investigation involving the theft of $373,000 of timber from 16th section school land in Pearl River County. A Harrison County man, contracted to harvest the timber, has been charged with the crime. If convicted, he could face up to five years in jail, a $5,000 fine, and ordered to make restitution.

The recovery of hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of stolen heavy equipment from at least seven southern states occurred during the past year. The thefts involved two separate equipment theft rings-one based in Georgia, the other in Texas. An arrest has been made, with more likely as the investigations continue.

Robert Jordan, Director

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Regulatory Services - Consumer Protection Division

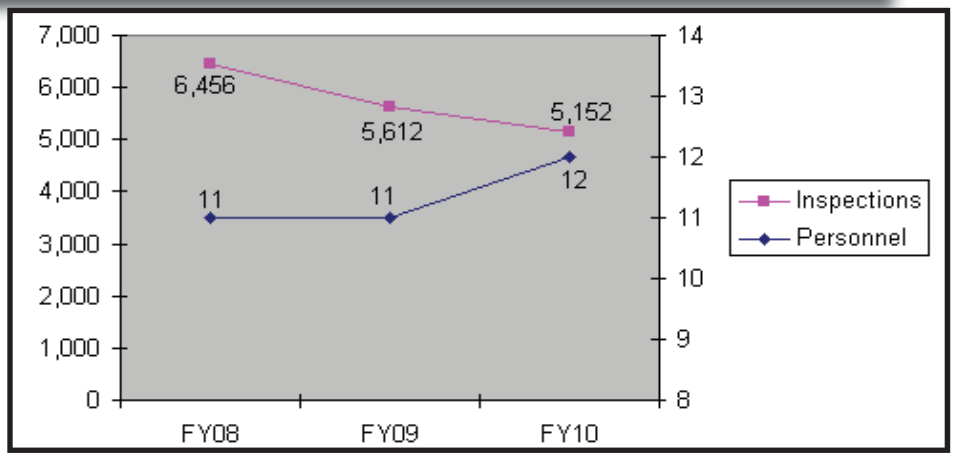
The main mission of the Consumer Protection Division is to ensure food quality and safety at the retail level, as well as ensuring fairness and equity in the marketplace through the administration and enforcement of certain laws and regulations designed primarily to protect the interest of the general public.

In FY 2010, the division continued improvement in efficiency. The chart, Number of Retail Food Sanitation Inspections FY 2008 through FY 2010, does represent a decreased inspection activity for retail food sanitation inspections; however, these were increases over FY 2006 when 4,545 inspections were conducted. FY 2007, FY 2008 and the first six months of FY 2009 were not considered as normal years for retail food sanitation inspections.

The Consumer Protection Division is one of the most diversified divisions in the Department of Agriculture and Commerce. In addition to certain retail food sanitation responsibilities, this division also has weights and measures responsibilities as well as administering five other laws. The division also conducts meat compliance inspections in retail food establishments under a U.S.D.A. Cooperative Agreement; performs U.S.D.A. Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) in designated retail food establishments, under a U.S.D.A. Cooperative Agreement; has a memorandum of understanding with the Mississippi Department of Health concerning retail food sanitation to alleviate job duplications and increase efficiency, and has a natural disaster partnership with the US Food and Drug Administration to coordinate with their agency and other state agencies in the event of a natural disaster such as a hurricane or a tornado outbreak.

The numbers below give an idea of the scope of this division's responsibilities:

- Retail store inspections 6,314
- Pre-packaged items weighed 31,880
  (10.14 % placed off-sale)
- Cases of shell eggs inspected 34,883



Number of Retail Food Sanitation Inspections FY08 through FY10

- Scales tested (100 pounds or less) 6,359
  (2.94 % rejected)
- Labeling Inspections 4,497
- Meat compliance inspections 4,691
- Retail food sanitation inspections* 5,152
  (2.66 % failed)
- Disposition of garbage store 5,156
  inspections
- UPC price verification inspections 380
  (12.25% failed)
- USDA COOL inspections 85

In FY 2008, the substantial increase in the number of inspections was probably due to special assignments and FDA and/or U.S.D.A. Class I Food Recalls in which we assisted those agencies by inspecting for recalled food products. During the first six months of FY 2009, a high priority was still given to the "New Direction in Food Sanitation Program," so above the normal number retail food sanitation inspections were conducted during this period.

The Consumer Protection Division has continued to increase efficiency both in the field and office through the use of laptop computers and a specialized computer software inspection program for field inspection staff and office personnel. The first six months of FY 2010, concluded the second year of our division's "New Direction in Food Sanitation Program." This program has proven to continually be very successful in reducing the number of sanitation violations in the stores as well as making the general public more aware of the condition of the stores in which they shop. This program did not change the method of conducting a sanitation inspection, but was designed and implemented to make consumers more aware of the sanitation conditions of retail food establishments in which they shop through the use of a color coded placard system. The division will strive to continue a cooperative working relationship with other state and federal agencies, as well as other bureaus and divisions of the department, to better serve and protect the general public.

John Tillson, Director

E-mail: JohnT@mdac.state.ms.us

Regulatory Services - Petroleum Division

The Petroleum Products Inspection Division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce insures the quality of fuel purchased within the state. All retail motor fuel products, which include gasoline, ethanol blended fuel, diesel fuel, biodiesel blended fuel, and kerosene, are analyzed by the Mississippi State Chemical Lab to insure product compliance within ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) specifications. Tests are also conducted to detect the presence of water as well as alcohol content. The Zeltex octane analyzer aids state inspectors in its use as a screening device to test for proper Federal Trade Commission octane ratings of fuel sold in the State of Mississippi.

State of the art slide-in calibration units are provided for all field personnel allowing them a more efficient and safer manner in which to verify calibration of retail motor fuel dispensing devices, through random retail device inspections. The units also help field staff avoid disrupting normal business practices on-site while performing inspections.

The petroleum division responded to over 200 consumer complaints, normally addressed within a 24-hour period, as well as conducted routine random device meter and fuel quality inspections. Water and sign inspections are also performed on site during each inspection to insure compliance. Total inspections of 3,107 retail locations involving over 78,000 individual pump meters were handled for fiscal year 2010. A total of 2,262 violations were issued for non-compliant devices. High-volume meters typical of truck stops and distributor racks are approved using the division's 150-gallon calibration trailer and 60-gallon calibration trailer.

Eight complaints were issued and civil penalties assessed in the amount of $41,100.00 were collected for non-compliant product.

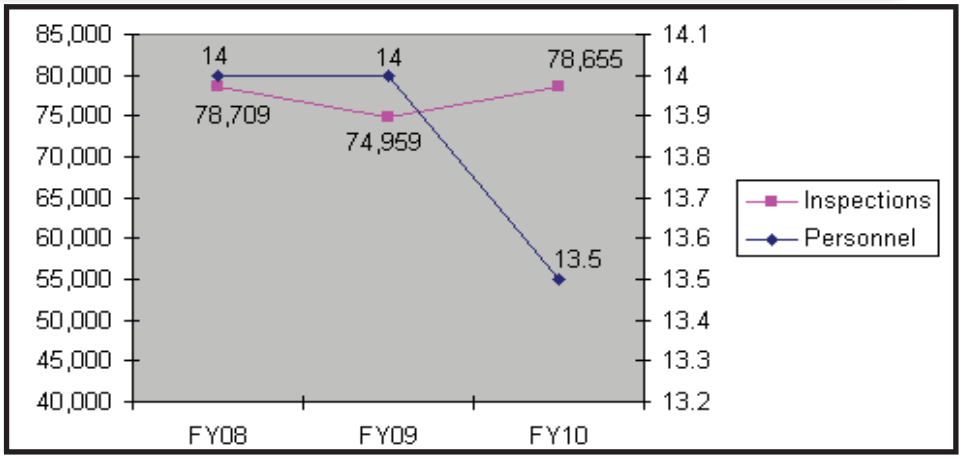
Petroleum, *continued on next page*

Petroleum, *continued from page 8*

Continued use of the WinWam Computer software designed specifically for Weights & Measures officials allows field personnel to work more independently and complete all inspection information for immediate downloads to the main office computer, giving complete access to all inspection data by office personnel.

In FY 2010, the Petroleum Divison was responsible for the following:

- Stations registered 3,107
- Petroleum pumps tested 78,655
- Petroleum products samples 5,773
- Violations issued 2,262
- Stop sales for fuel violations 252
- Sales for calibration violations 139
- Stop sales for sign violations 66
- Stop sales for water violations 128
- Total nozzles 51,811



Inspections and Personnel for FY08 through FY10

Jennifer Thompson, Director

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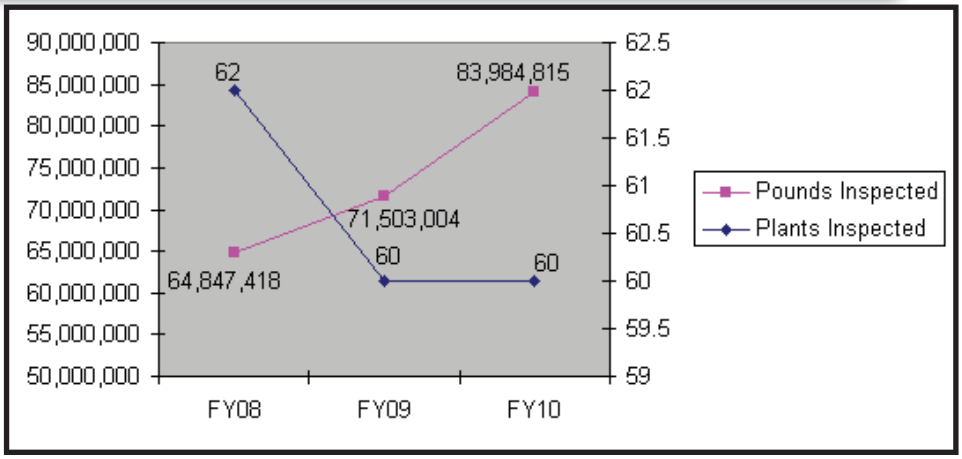
Regulatory Services - Meat Inspection Division

The Meat Inspection Division provides food safety assurance to meat and poultry food consumers. This is done by providing inspection services 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 is becoming more critical as more food products are intended to be consumed with little or no further preparation at home.

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 on all computers that field personnel use in performing inspection duties. This system electronically schedules work, receives and transfers inspection findings, files and stores the associated information, and retrieves it for supervisory and administrative use. This results in savings in supplies, postage, and time, and allows this division to concentrate more of its resources toward food safety for the consumers.

The Meat Inspection Division is moving from organoleptic inspection to more and newly-evolving scientific methods of assessing the effectiveness of food safety systems. This division is constantly implementing new scientific advancements in food safety. Each establishment that produces meat products now have interventions in place to eliminate or control the pathogens that are most likely to cause food borne illness. The success of these interventions decreases the instances of illnesses caused by consuming meat-food products and increases the assurance of safety in the products that consumers now purchase and serve to their families.



Pounds and Plants Inspected for FY08 through FY10

The following are numbers that give you an idea about the scope of the Meat Inspection Division:

- Pounds of red meat inspected 47,780,732
- Pounds of poultry inspected 36,204,083
- Number of animals inspected 256,541
- Number of quail inspected 157,626
- Number of rabbits inspected 29,705
- Number of state meat plants licenses issued 39
- Number T/A plant (no state license required) 21

Richard Benton, Director

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Regulatory Services - Weights and Measures Division

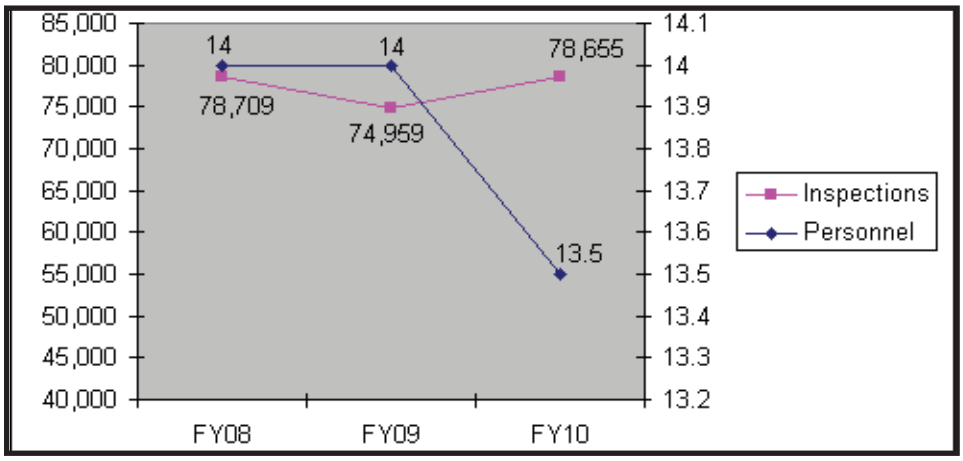
The Weights and Measures Division within MDAC is charged with the responsibility of calibration and testing of scales and measurement equipment used in commerce and trade and promotes uniformity of the weights and measures laws, regulations, and standards to achieve equity between buyer and seller, which protects both in the marketplace. The buyer is assured he gets what he pays for and the seller is assured of a marketplace based on fair competition.

Weights and Measures officials annually inspect thousands of scales and other types of devices. This is done by testing and inspecting commercial devices, package inspection, and randomly auditing selected items using U.P.C. scanners to insure that the labeled shelf or advertised price matches that checkout price. The department also investigates any weights and measures complaints. The department licenses anyone who sells, installs, or repairs any weighing or measuring device which is legal for trade, used commercially in the State.

A Weights and Measures Inspector making an inspection at a location to verify accuracy of the scale and insure the scale is legal for trade.

The Weights and Measures personnel was responsible for the following:

- Tested 907 heavy scales and rejected 185
- Tested 3,420 intermediate scales and rejected 303
- Tested 126 livestock scales and rejected 27
- Tested 37 rail scales and rejected 4
- Calibrated 45 dairy farm milk tanks
- Bonded 66 Weighmaster inspections and failed 21
- Conducted 247 pulpwood/timber inspections and rejected 57
- Checked 731 packages and failed 62
- Handled 167 UPC inspections and failed 16



Pounds and Plants Inspected for FY08 through FY10

State Metrology Laboratory

The Weights and Measures Division also maintains the State Metrology Laboratory on the campus of Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi. The Mississippi Metrology Laboratory is accredited by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for the testing of mass, volume, and length. The Metrology Laboratory uses these standards to calibrate the weights and volume measures used by MDAC and service companies that install, repair, and test scales and gas pumps used for commerce in the state. All mass and volume test standards used by producers, weights and measures repair agencies and state inspectors are certified annually in the laboratory with all laboratory measurements being conducted under conditions and techniques recognized as recommended laboratory practices by NIST.

- The State Metrology personnel conducted 2,481 calibrations
- Tested 173 gram scales and rejected 50
- Tested 206 grain moisture meters and rejected 10
- Oven tested 57 soybeans, 70 corn, 99 wheat, and 35 rice samples

Moisture Meter Testing Laboratory

The Moisture Meter Testing laboratory is part of the Weights and Measures Division of MDAC and is located on the campus of the Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville, Mississippi. The Moisture Meter Laboratory provides testing and inspection of devices used to measure the moisture content of agricultural products offered for sale, processed or stored, using standard methods set by the USDA. The Moisture Meter Laboratory also compiles grain standards used in the inspection of grain moisture meters tested in the State.

Grain Warehouse and Dealer Laws

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is charged with administering the Mississippi Grain Warehouse and Grain Dealer Laws. Anyone who operates a grain warehouse in the state or is a grain dealer that buys from a Mississippi producer must first obtain a license.

Grain Warehouses and Grain Dealers license are renewed annually. Each application for a new license or renewed license is reviewed and must meet the standards set in the Mississippi Grain Warehouse and Grain Dealer Laws. Currently there are twenty Grain Dealers and fourteen Grain Warehouses licensed by the Department.

Connie Braswell, Director

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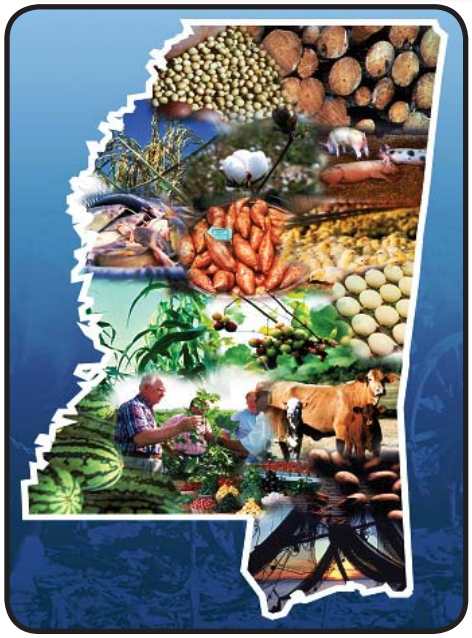
Marketing



Agriculture is Mississippi's number one industry, employing approximately 29% of the state's workforce either directly or indirectly. In Mississippi, agriculture is a 5.5 billion-dollar industry, with a 12.7 billion dollar economic impact each year. There are approximately 42,000 farms in the state covering 11 million acres, which makes agriculture a significant contributor 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 schools and civic organizations across the state.
- Participated in conferences and festivals throughout Mississippi.
- Distributed thousands of recipes using products grown in Mississippi.
- Marketed the *Mississippi Farmers Market* Cookbook with recipes submitted from Mississippians statewide.
- Counseled companies, producers, and organizations.
- Worked with the Mississippi Farmers Market to promote agriculture and healthy eating through cooking demonstrations and other events.
- Administered the Mississippi Certified Farmers Market Program, which is an ongoing marketing initiative for farmers markets across the state.
- Assisted certified farmers markets with advertising costs through this marketing initiative.
- Assisted in marketing of the Mississippi Farmers Market Nutrition Program.
- Managed the Specialty Crop Block Grant to assist Mississippi Fruit and Vegetable Growers, beekeepers, and industry.
- Awarded 12 grants to universities and producer organizations.
- Worked with Mississippi State University, Auburn University, and Alcorn State University on Federal State Marketing Improvement Program grants.
- Continued to support the Catfish Country of Origin Law in restaurants, which went into effect July 1, 2008.
- Managed multiple assistance and disaster programs.
- Conducted five educational workshops for growers and agriculture industry with participaton of over 450 people.

International Trade

- Member of the Southern United States Trade Association, encompassing 15 southern states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Its 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.

Public Information

Since 1911, 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, or 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 47,400 subscribers is not limited to in-state residents but goes to out-of-state residents as well. It includes:

- Information to statewide media on all important agricultural events.
- An agricultural commodity directory distributed statewide and located on the web at www.mdac.state.ms.us.
- A fruit and vegetable guide.
- A directory of the 54 Mississippi farmers markets.

Trade Shows, Conferences and Fairs

- Mississippi State Fair.
- Dixie National Rodeo & Livestock Show and Parade.
- National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.
- Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture.
- Cool season fruit and vegetable production workshop.
- Farmers market manager workshop.
- High tunnel field day.

Make Mine Mississippi Program

This unique marketing program was created to highlight products at least 51% produced, manufactured, or enhanced 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 providing the foundation for Make Mine Mississippi was passed in April 1999. At the end of FY 2010, 1037 companies across the state in 30 categories 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 businesses grow, adding to the economy of our state.

- From the inception of the cooperative promotions fund in 1999 to the end of FY 2009, 738 companies were allocated funding.
- More than $649,000 has been awarded.
- The companies reported over $90,000,000 in sales as a result of the promotional activities paid for in part by this program.
- Businesses are currently reporting some 3,900 new jobs created as a result of the Make Mine Mississippi program.
- Make Mine Mississippi is meant to unify the promotion of all Mississippi products, promote a positive image of the state, and sell Mississippi products.

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

Marketing, *continued on next page*

Marketing, *continued from page 11*

the dissemination of livestock reports, collecting and disseminating grain price information, and voicing radio and television broadcasts to 75 radio stations and one television station.

This office provides price information on livestock and grain to lending institutions, university agricultural economists, consultants, and livestock associations. A livestock report is issued in the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*, which has a circulation of 47,400 readers per year.

Thirteen livestock auction markets are reported by eight cross-trained Mississippi Board of Animal Health personnel. Prices collected from the twelve sales represent 85% of all the livestock markets throughout the state.

Agritourism

Agritourism is a fast growing part of the future of Mississippi's agriculture. An estimated 30 million people travel to and around Mississippi each year. By linking the state's Travel and Tourism Industry with Mississippi's number one industry, agriculture, a very successful partnership is being realized. With the public's desire for a "farm experience" and for the fun of fairs and festivals, the Department of Agriculture and Commerce is committed to promoting agritourism in our state.

Andy Prosser, Director

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Agriculture Museum

In 2010, the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum was visited by over 130,000 visitors from all 50 states and 30 countries. Spring break attendance continues to increase each year.

During February, the Museum celebrated Black History Month. Artifacts and information were displayed and offered about influential African Americans affecting agriculture. One example is George Washington Carver.

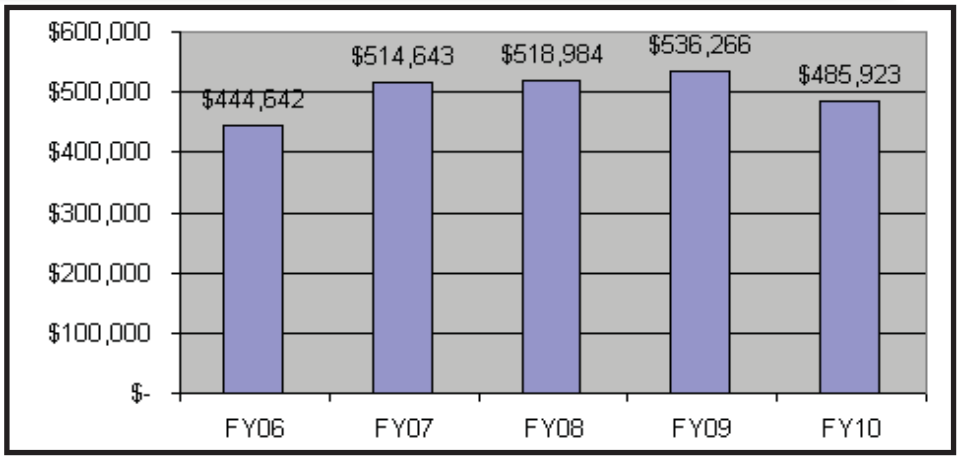
In June, the Museum began displaying quilts made by Mississippians. The quilts are hung above the artifacts in the Heritage Center. In December, a collection of Christmas quilts were hung to celebrate the holiday season.

The Museum phone lines were upgraded and are now included in the capitol complex system.

The 2010 Harvest Festival was visited by over 5,000 people, of which 3,500 were children. The museum received a grant in the amount of $3,250 from the Mississippi Arts Commission to help present the event. This educational event showed demonstrations each day of the Bisland Cotton gin, saw mill, cane mill, print shop, blacksmith shop, grist mill, and dutch oven cooking. The event also featured hit and miss engines, blue grass music, and antique tractors and vehicles from the Antique Vehicle Club of Mississippi.

The popularity of the model train exhibit continues to grow as the Museum volunteers add to the display.

The Museum's Educational Center continues to generate revenue since it became a rental facility in 2009. The Center can accommodate 80 people. The Museum uses the facility as an additional educational area to host schools and the summer day camp.



Museum Revenue From FY06 through FY10

Money given to the museum through grants was used to purchase a power tiller and wagon suitable to be pulled by mules or tractor.

The Museum continues to accept artifacts if they can be used by the Museum. In November 2010, the Museum received a "perfect" bale of cotton grown by a farmer in Belzoni, MS. The bale was grown in 2008 and is considered the highest of quality.

The Museum continues educational programs with the assistance of the 4-H Museum and Learning Center (MSU-Extension Service). During the spring 2010 semester, the Museum hosted "AG Days," in which students could come and plant a vegetable seed and take it back to their school and watch it grow. Students were taught the process that a seed must go through in order to grow into a plant. In addition, the students were given a packet of seeds that included peas, green beans, squash, and corn. The fun-filled science activity was funded by a grant received from Monsanto.

The Museum's revenue in 2010 totaled $485,923.26, exceeding expenses of $458,872.35. Revenue in 2010 decreased from 2009's total of $536,266.65; nevertheless, the museum was able to keep expenses below revenue, decreasing the total in 2009 from $478,269.39 to $458,872.35. Realizing that revenue would be less, the museum cut expenses tremendously and spent money carefully.

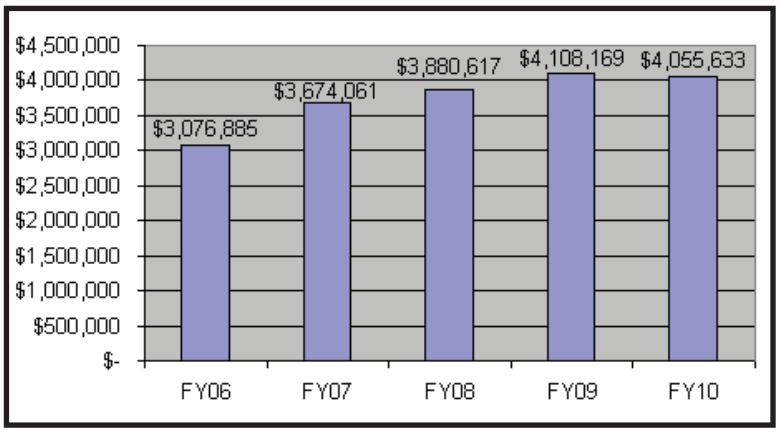
The Museum hosted the following events in 2010: Black History Month, Easter Egg Hunt and Sunrise Service, 4th of July Celebration, Kids Day Camp, Celtic Festival, Kids Pumpkin Adventure, Halloween Carnival, Harvest Festival, and Country Christmas. The Museum also offered a Christmas play during the Christmas event.

Individuals wanting more information should contact Charlie Dixon at 601-432-4500.

Charlie Dixon, Director

E-mail: Charlie@mdac.state.ms.us

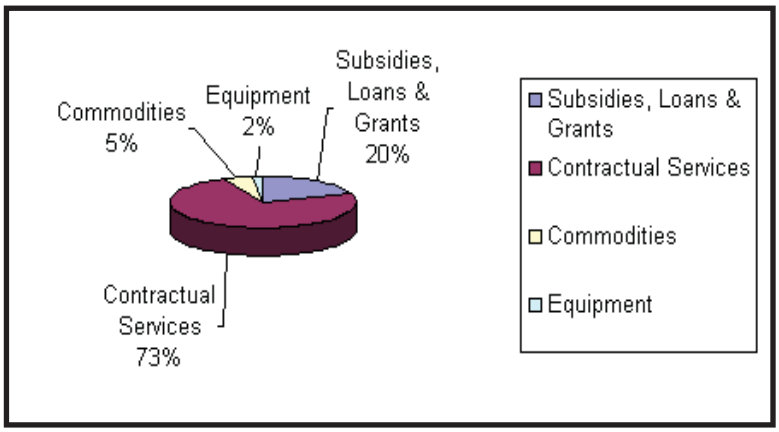
Charts & Graphs



License and Inspection Fee Collections for FY06 through FY10

The fees include *Market Bulletin*, Egg Marketing, Corn, Peanut Promotion Boards, Weights and Measures, and other regulatory fees.

FY2010 total is $4,055,633



Egg Marketing Board Special Funds

Total Revenues	**$63,636**
Total Expenditures	**$63,360**