

EMERGING TRENDS

A Newsletter of the Mississippi Poultry Association

2024 ■ Issue 1

MANGINSAY APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF MSU POULTRY RESEARCH AND DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

Joy Nabors, Mississippi State University



*Dr. Natalie Manginsay
(Photo by Tom Thompson)*

STARKVILLE, Miss.—Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine has appointed Dr. Natalie Manginsay as director of the Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory.

For almost nine years, Manginsay has served as an associate clinical professor of avian medicine for the PRDL, which is located in Pearl and one of four laboratories in the Mississippi Veterinary Research and Diagnostic Laboratory System.

The PRDL plays an essential role in supporting the poultry industry in the state through disease detection and surveillance, as well as contributing to global research. The industry also relies upon the expertise of PRDL veterinarians for advice and guidance.

In her new position, Manginsay will lead the lab to fulfill its service, teaching and research missions.

She will continue to participate in the lab's diagnostic and field service, teaching and applied research work, while also spending up to 50% of her time on administrative endeavors such as managing relationships with poultry industry stakeholders.

"Dr. Manginsay has shown leadership in the lab and that she can lead the poultry section, so we feel like this is just a natural step forward for her," said CVM Head of Pathobiology and Population Medicine Dr. Bill Epperson.

"My vision for the PRDL is that it will become a center for excellence in poultry service, teaching and research," said Manginsay. To achieve this, I plan to establish a 'Poultry Excellence Team,' which will be a partnership between PRDL and the poultry industry to foster collaboration and promote excellence in each aspect of our mission. Field service is an aspect of our service to the poultry industry that I would like to expand."

Teaching is an important part of the PRDL's mission. Veterinary students, residents and graduate students receive advanced training in the classroom, laboratory and the field to prepare for careers in poultry medicine and pathology. MSU's veterinary college offers a Master of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences poultry program, housed in the PRDL and one of only eight in the country

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- **CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF INNOVATIONS AT THE POULTRY RESEARCH UNIT**
- **MPA SUPPORTS CREPE COOKOFF**
- **BEST FRIED CHICKEN IN MISSISSIPPI**
- **BENEFITS OF MPA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**



approved by the American College of Poultry Veterinarians.

"When Dr. Danny Magee retired from the PRDL after many years of service, the college determined that it was important to identify a new director for the laboratory to provide leadership and maintain relationships with stakeholders," said CVM Dean Dr. Nicholas Frank. "After conducting an internal search, we are pleased to appoint Dr. Manginsay to this position.

She brings her experience, energy and enthusiasm to this important leadership role."

Manginsay received her veterinary degree from the University of Pretoria in South Africa and was employed as a state veterinarian at a provincial veterinary laboratory there. She received her master's in avian medicine and her Ph.D. in veterinary and biomedical sciences from the University of

Georgia. She is a member of the American Association of Avian Pathologists and diplomate of the American College of Poultry Veterinarians.

MSU College of Veterinary Medicine provides two full years of clinical experience with students receiving training in all species and completing more than 50 surgeries prior to graduation. The college is nationally recognized for its shelter medicine and aquaculture programs, as well as research in antimicrobial resistance. It is the only college of veterinary medicine to lead a USAID innovation lab and offers both B.S. in veterinary medical technology and joint DVM-Ph.D. programs. For more information, visit <http://www.cvm.msstate.edu/>. ■

DENNY HICKMAN, RETIRED CHAIRMAN OF PECO FOODS, PASSED AWAY IN MARCH

Mississippi Poultry Hall of Fame Member Denny Hickman passed away on March 22.

He was inducted into the Mississippi Poultry Hall of Fame in 2004. During the 1990s, as chairman of Peco, Denny grew the company dramatically by acquiring four new processing complexes in Mississippi, making it a major presence in the state's poultry industry.

A brief version of his obituary is shown below.

"Denny is survived by his wife of over 60 years, Patricia Ann "Patsy" Bouchillon Hickman; daughter, Staci Hickman Parker (Jim Skinner) of Tuscaloosa; two sons, Mark Anthony Hickman (Ann) and John Denny Hickman, both of Tuscaloosa; brother, Herman Jerome Hickman (Margaret "Peggy") of Gordo; and six grandchildren.



Denny was born January 15, 1941 in Gordo, Alabama to the late John Herman Hickman and Willie Travis Blakney Hickman. He was a member of Gordo First Baptist Church and retired Chairman of the Board of Peco Foods, Inc.

Denny built his reputation for speed and innovation at a young age. A lifelong aviator, he earned his pilot's license at age 15.

Learning the poultry business alongside his pioneering father,

he became president of Peco upon John Herman Hickman's death in 1983. Denny knew from experience that growing the company was the key to reaching the top corporate tier. With a trusted team and disciplined work ethic, his strategy was right on target. In his current role as Chairman Emeritus, he kept a keen eye on Peco's continued trajectory.

Denny and Patsy were at home in any setting: from the West Alabama countryside to the global cities they crisscrossed to grow the corporate footprint of Peco Foods, Inc. Most important, Denny cherished the companionship of his lively family and was the heartbeat of good times that bring loved ones together.

Denny considered a quality education Priority #1. He was especially proud that the Hickman family has earned 14 degrees from the University of Alabama System - with more in the pipeline to come. The students, faculty, staff and alumni of the university were grateful beneficiaries of his generous support.

Denny's great-grands always looked forward to every occasion to tumble, run and cheer the Crimson Tide with their beloved "Gangie and Gran."

Denny personified the Golden Rule. He treated everyone with dignity and respect, setting the example that has paved the way for his children and grandchildren's success." ■



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CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF INNOVATION AT THE POULTRY RESEARCH UNIT

By Jody Purswell, PRU Research Leader



Since 1964, the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) has been conducting poultry research at the Mississippi State, Mississippi location. The Poultry Research Unit (PRU) embarked on its mission when USDA-ARS created the South Central Poultry Research Laboratory (SCPRL) in 1964. Construction began in late February 1964, was completed in late December of that year, and the ribbon cutting ceremony was held on May 29, 1965. The program for the ribbon cutting ceremony described the mission of the SCPRL, "The South Central Poultry Research Laboratory is dedicated to a program of reducing the condemnation of broilers. The research will be conducted by specialists in the Animal Husbandry, Agricultural Engineering, and Animal Disease and Parasite Research Divisions, ARS, USDA, in cooperation with the Mississippi State University and other interested universities and colleges in the area. The broiler industry in Mississippi and neighboring states also will contribute to the research of the Laboratory."

The approach to research described above has been a hallmark of the Unit's identity, with teams of scientists with different specialties cooperating with industry and universities to solve a wide variety of problems affecting all sectors of the poultry industry. Interacting and working closely with our industry stakeholders has been a key part of the Unit's culture from the very beginning and continues today. PRU scientists have always enjoyed a close relationship with Mississippi State University and have engaged in projects with faculty across multiple departments including Poultry Science, Agricultural and Biological Engineering, and the College of Veterinary Medicine. This special relationship continues to contribute to the ongoing success of the broader poultry research efforts in Mississippi. The Unit also maintains strong collaborative links with neighboring states' land grant universities, most notably Auburn University's Poultry Science Department and National Poultry Technology Center and recent efforts with the University of Tennessee.



The initial focus of the research was to reduce condemnations resulting from *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* (MG) and co-infections. However, the research program soon included nutrition, housing, litter management, and general bird health as independent avenues of research to reduce input costs and boost profitability. The PRU's current research programs are conducted under ARS National Program 101 Animal Production and National Program 103 Animal Health and target four topic areas:

- Mitigation and prevention of *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* in laying hens.
- Mitigation and prevention of *E. coli* infections in broilers and layers.
- Reduction of necrotic enteritis in broilers.
- Improved housing design and management strategies for broilers.

Throughout its history the PRU has been at the forefront of innovation in poultry production and many common husbandry, nutrition, and disease diagnostic and preventative practices were developed by its scientists. Some notable accomplishments are:

- The brood curtain was pioneered at PRU in the early 1970s and its use has been responsible for significant fuel savings in broiler houses for decades.
- Initial design guidance for solid wall broiler houses were developed in the early 1970s and was continually improved. Virtually all new broiler houses built since 2010 have solid walls.
- Air velocity research for tunnel ventilation conditions conducted in the mid 2000s showed the value of increased ventilation rates in reducing feed conversion and increased carcass yield.
- PRU scientists in conjunction with MSU faculty pioneered the use of high yielding energy grasses such as switchgrass and giant miscanthus for use as bedding materials in place of pine shavings.
- In the early 1980s, mycoplasmosis was a significant burden for the table egg industry. PRU scientists pioneered the use of live attenuated vaccines in layer chickens to minimize the negative effects of mycoplasma infection on egg production.
- Development of effective in-house spray vaccine technology for both caged and loose poultry for application of bacterial and viral vaccines. These systems have been adopted by table egg producers to improve vaccination rates while reducing labor costs.

The keys to these successes are the dedicated scientists and support staff within the PRU. Our best estimate is that 25 research scientists have spent at least part of their careers here at the PRU with four serving over 30 years; the longest serving scientist spent 36 years with the Unit. Half of our current scientists will all have served over 20 years by the end of 2024. The support staff has similar records of

service with several current members with over 15 years of service and a recent retiree with over 40 years. The mission of USDA-ARS to solve long-term problems combined with the exceptional stability in Unit personnel over time has contributed to an environment where solutions to fundamental challenges facing the poultry industry can be generated. ■



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2024 MISSISSIPPI POULTRY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The 2024 Mississippi Poultry Foundation Scholarship winners are Victoria Evans of Lake, MS, Gavin Hare of Ashville, AL, Janna Claire Ishee of Laurel, MS, and Savana Ashley of Woodville, MS. This is the 21st year the scholarship has been awarded and the eighth year since the scholarship amount increased to \$4,000 per student.

Victoria Evans is the daughter of Charles and Varonica Evans; her family grows for Koch Foods. Victoria is a graduate of Newton County Academy. She is attending MSU, pursuing a degree in animal and dairy science, and plans to obtain a master's in agribusiness to help combat hunger in Mississippi.

Gavin Hare is the son of Keri Leigh Hare of Ashville, AL. Gavin is a graduate of Ashville High School. He is attending MSU, pursuing a degree in poultry science, and plans to be a service technician in the poultry industry.

Janna Claire Ishee is the daughter of Zach Ishee of Laurel, MS. Janna Claire is a graduate of Stringer Attendance Center

and is currently attending Jones Community College and plans to attend MSU to pursue a degree in poultry science to be able to work in the poultry industry.

Savana Ashley is the daughter of Adriene Carter and Steven Ashley of Woodville, MS. Savana is a graduate of Wilkinson County Christian Academy. She is currently enrolled at MSU, pursuing a degree in poultry science. After graduation, Savana plans to be an agricultural lobbyist.

The winners are chosen by the Foundation's Scholarship committee composed of educators at the university, community college, and high school levels based on the students' ACT scores, school transcripts, and an essay showcasing their knowledge of the poultry industry.

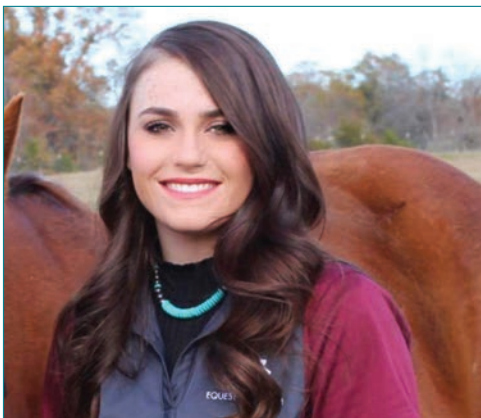
The Mississippi Poultry Foundation, created in 2005, has awarded \$157,000 in 66 scholarships to 61 different students. Those who are majoring in poultry science or are the children or grandchildren of MPA grower members, receive extra weight on the selection. ■



Savana Ashley



Janna Claire Ishee



Victoria Evans



Gavin Hare

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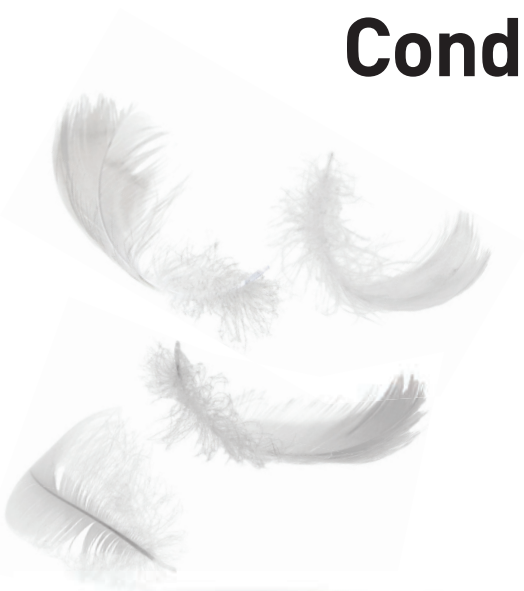
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MPA SUPPORTS CREPE COOKOFF

Lauren Fortenberry, MPA Event Coordinator

The Mississippi Poultry Association, the Mississippi Egg Marketing Board, and the Mississippi Beef Council hosted the 3rd annual 4-H Crepe cookoff on February 10th during the Dixie National Rodeo. Eleven 4-Hers put their cooking skills to the test!

Jameria Carter from Oktibbeha County won first place. She cooked a delicious mixed-berry cheesecake crepe. Second place went to Ezra Cuevas from Hancock County. He cooked an amazing seafood crepe. Coming in third, was Heidi



The winning creation

Hood from Forrest County. Heidi cooked a mouthwatering steak diane crepe. Hedi shared the Best of Beef award with Lydia Carter from Oktibbeha County, who cooked a cheesy beef crepe. The contestants placing first, second, and third were awarded cash prizes by the Mississippi Poultry Association in amounts of \$75, \$50, and \$25. The Mississippi Beef Council awarded \$25 to the Best of Beef crepe.

A total of eleven contestants from around Mississippi competed in the crepe cook off, presenting their entry to a panel of judges within an hour. Also competing were Andrew Bragg- Rankin County, James Edward Bragg-

Rankin County, John Clayton Kitchens- Lauderdale County, Joy Kitchen Lauderdale County, Clara Kate Reed- Rankin County, Raylee Reed- Rankin County, and Kylee Tomlinson Oktibbeha County.



Contestant Jameria Carter from Oktibbeha County preparing her winning entry.

Associate Professor and Clinical Director in the Department of Preventive Medicine at UMMC, Dr. Josie Bidwell, author and registered dietitian nutritionist, Mrs. Rebecca Turner, and I served as judges for the cook-off. Serving as the Mistress of Ceremonies was MPA Past Chair Dr. Ryn Laster who is also the board chair of the Mississippi Egg Marketing Board.

"Learning how to cook is a necessity these days, especially to be able to cook healthier meals. The skills these young people learn

about cooking and food safety will stick with them for the rest of their lives," Dr. Laster said. ■





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MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE POSTS SECOND HIGHEST DOLLAR VALUE

Mr. Robert Nathan Gregory, MSU Extension Service

STARKVILLE, Miss. -- Mississippi agriculture's value of production fell 10.3% in 2023, but still posted its second highest result on record at \$8.8 billion.

Though the value of poultry production fell more than 22% from nearly \$4 billion in 2022, the agricultural commodity still dwarfs all others in the state with an estimated value of \$3.1 billion this year. The state's forestry industry took its usual place as the state's third most valuable agricultural product at \$1.5 billion, an increase of nearly 10% from \$1.4 billion in 2022.

Soybeans was the most produced of many Mississippi-grown row crops, holding steady in second place. At \$1.6 billion, its production value decreased 9.4% from last year's \$1.72 billion.

Outside of row crops, catfish production was worth \$251.2 million this year, which is down nearly 10% from \$278 million in 2022. Livestock netted a total value of \$509 million, which is an increase of nearly 16 percent.

During the 2020s, corn and cotton have competed annually for the state's second most valuable row crop. Corn won a close battle in 2022 but grew its lead significantly this year. Its production was worth \$675.4 million compared to \$643.3 million last year.

Cotton saw a significant reduction both in planted acreage and estimated value. In 2023, the value was \$397.3 million, a 35% dip from \$615 million in 2022.

Mississippi soybean growers harvested 2.15 million acres of soybeans this year despite almost the entire state being in various levels of drought. More than 122 million bushels were produced at an estimated 57 bushels per acre.

The worst of the loss, Irby said, was south of Miss. Highway 16, which runs west to east across the state between Issaquena and Kemper counties. The drought impact on soybeans was the most severe in south and central Mississippi.

Corn was largely unaffected by the dry conditions, as producers harvested about 770,000 acres in Mississippi and yielded around 182 bushels per acre and more than 140



million total bushels.

"Most of the cotton looked great pre-drought, but there were exceptions in south Mississippi where the drought was severe by mid-July," said Brian Pieralisi, MSU Extension cotton specialist. "Conversely, the Black Prairie region was unusually wet for two weeks during mid- to peak bloom. Both events caused yield reductions."

Of the state's other row crops, peanuts had the highest percentage increase in production value at 18% but only 18,000 acres were harvested. The value of rice production also spiked 29% over 2022. Its 2023 estimated total value is \$134.6 million with 118,000 acres harvested.

The production value of specialty crops rose slightly to nearly \$113 million this year. Hay's total was nearly \$180 million, up nearly 21% from 2022. Wheat production also saw a small increase in worth at just over \$36 million. Sweet potato production value was flat from 2022 at just over \$91.5 million.

Each year, growers in each state receive a variety of government payments through various ag safety net programs. This year, they received around \$256.6 million. ■

POULTRY RETAINS STATE'S TOP AG SPOT AT \$3.1B

Bonnie Coblentz, MSU Extension Service

STARKVILLE, Miss. -- Mississippi's poultry took an estimated 23% loss in value in 2023; though production was strong, a failure to meet the previous year's record high prices was responsible for the hit.

Poultry generated an estimated \$3.1 billion to Mississippi agriculture in 2023, down from the \$3.9 billion generated in 2022. Eggs had the larger decline, dropping 30% to \$202 million, while broilers dropped 22% to \$2.9 billion.

With this farm gate value, poultry retains its top spot in Mississippi agriculture, above soybeans at \$1.6 billion and forestry at \$1.5 billion. The U.S. Department of Agriculture

will release final ag values in April.

Josh Maples, agricultural economist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, said the decreased value does not mean 2023 was a bad year.

"For context, the 2023 poultry value of production is 17.5 percent higher than the



Poultry generated an estimated \$3.1 billion farmgate value to Mississippi agriculture in 2023, down from the \$3.9 billion generated in 2022. (File photo by MSU Extension Service)

2021 value of production,” Maples said. “The current USDA forecast for broiler prices is to be a little more stable and similar in 2024 as they have been in 2023. Mississippi producers grew an estimated 4.3 billion pounds of broilers in 2023, maintaining a No. 6 ranking in the country for pounds produced.

The state is 13th nationally in egg production, and 2023’s decrease in egg value was also caused by exceptionally high egg prices in 2022.



Poultry retained its top spot in Mississippi agriculture, although egg and broiler prices in 2023 failed to reach the exceptionally high levels of 2022. That pushed Mississippi’s poultry value down an estimated 23% from the previous year. (File photo by MSU Extension Service).

“Many consumers likely remember the very high egg prices during the 2022 Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays,” Maples said. “Prices retreated to more normal levels throughout 2023 and are expected to be similar in 2024.”

Jonathan Moon, Extension poultry specialist, said disease battles caused a performance loss. The industry had an ongoing battle with highly pathogenic avian

influenza, or HPAI, but also infectious laryngotracheitis, or ILT. ILT is a highly contagious respiratory virus that affects mature chickens and pheasants, and the best method of preventing the spread is through good biosecurity practices and proper vaccinations.

“The risk of HPAI remains as high as it has ever been,”

Moon said. “If we have a positive case, it will cause losses in export markets.”

Moon said when a state encounters an HPAI outbreak in a commercial poultry flock, exports are on hold until the state can meet the standards to be declared HPAI-free again. The affected farm is quarantined, and the affected flock is depopulated and disposed, while the premises are cleaned and sanitized to pass inspection.

“HPAI testing and surveillance is conducted within the surrounding area,” Moon said. “When all the criteria have been met and the state can self-declare themselves HPAI-free, USDA can submit this to the international trade partners and hopefully exports will then continue.”

This stage can take months, and if another farm experiences an HPAI outbreak, the process is extended. Mississippi had only one HPAI outbreak on a commercial poultry farm in 2023.

Moon said 2023 was a very poor year for publicly traded poultry companies, which reported major losses last year. This year may be as difficult.

“The high price of feed ingredients early in the year and the low market price would be what we are still trying to overcome from the end of 2023 and extending into 2024,” Moon said.

Labor shortages challenged the industry in 2023, and Moon said there remains a big opportunity for many staffing positions, particularly skilled positions like drivers, mechanics, electricians, plumbers and welders.

2023 marks the 29th straight year that poultry has topped the list of agricultural commodities in Mississippi. ■

MSU TOPS \$300 MILLION IN LATEST NSF RESEARCH SURVEY, AMONG TOP 100 NATIONALLY

James Carskadon
Mississippi State University

STARKVILLE, Miss.—Mississippi State University is again among the top research universities nationally after reporting more than \$300 million in research and development expenditures in the latest National Science Foundation report.

MSU’s \$303,418,000 in research and development expenditures ranks No. 97 nationally in the NSF’s latest Higher Education Research and Development survey, which covers data from fiscal year 2022. That dollar figure represents a 10% increase from the previous year, just above the average national increase of 9%. The record research funding strengthens MSU’s ability to stay at the forefront of innovation and address some of society’s most

pressing challenges.

As the Magnolia State’s leading research university, MSU again accounts for more than half (53.6%) of the \$565.3 million in research and development expenditures reported by all Mississippi institutions in the NSF survey.

“I am extremely proud of the way our research activities continue to grow and help lead our state forward,” said MSU President Mark E. Keenum. “We have research teams supporting our state’s most vital economic sectors and expertise that is recognized around our nation and world. Our research programs also provide unmatched hands-on learning opportunities for our students as they work closely with world-class faculty on impactful research.”

MSU was ranked in the top 15 of three disciplines—agriculture (11), natural resources and conservation (14), and aerospace engineering (15). Disciplines ranked in the top 50 include industrial and manufacturing engineering (23), materials science (27), geological and earth sciences (28), social sciences (30), business management and business administration (42), and ocean and marine sciences (48). MSU Vice President for Research and Economic Development Julie Jordan said the wide range of MSU's highly ranked fields underscores the university's ability to excel in diverse disciplines.

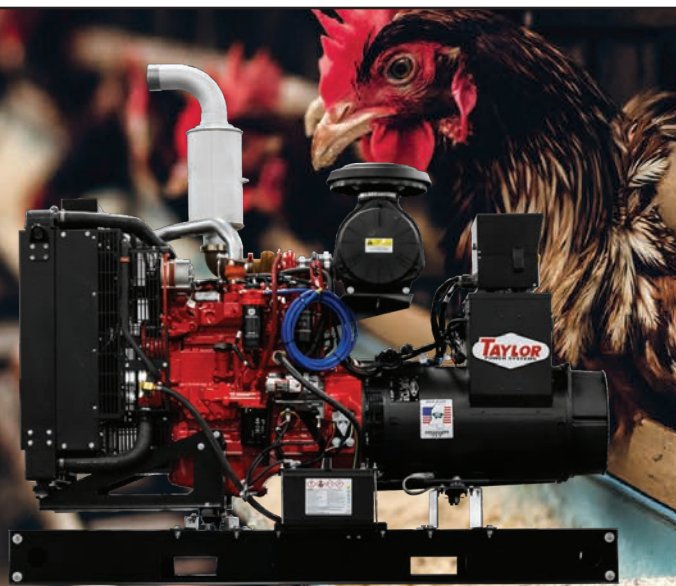
"While I am proud of our broad strengths, I am even more proud of our collaborative culture that allows for the creation

of interdisciplinary research teams that can tap into multiple areas of expertise to develop innovative solutions," Jordan said. "We have more than 4,000 research personnel that are the backbone of our research enterprise, and I thank them for their tireless efforts to improve our state, nation and world."

The new survey shows MSU is ranked No. 64 among public institutions in research and development expenditures. MSU's top 15 ranking in agriculture and natural resources highlight the university's ability to support two of the state's top industries – agriculture and forestry, said MSU Vice President for the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine Keith Coble. ■






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MPA POULTRY MANAGEMENT SCHOOL SPEAKERS SET FOR MAY 14-15 SCHOOL

Lauren Fortenberry, MPA Event Coordinator

The 2024 MPA Poultry Management School is scheduled for May 14–15 in Starkville. Both days of the meeting will be held at the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine with lunch on day two moving to the MSU Poultry Science building.

The crawfish is back! We will have a crawfish boil at 6:00 p.m. at the Starkville VFW on the 14th. Transportation will be provided to and from the VFW.

We are doing the booths again this year. Your table will be out for both days at the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine outside the auditorium. You can pay for your booth registration fee, and sponsorship on our website, mspoultry.org.

For parking, please reach out to Lauren Fortenberry **601-932-7560** or fortenberry@mspoultry.org.

You can make a room reservation at one of the following hotels:

- Hilton Garden Inn
- La Quinta Inn & Suites
- Hampton Inn
- Russell Inn
- The Courtyard by Marriott
- Holiday Inn

This meeting has been approved 3 PAACO credits and 6 RACE credits

MPA Poultry Management School Agenda

May 14, 2024

11:00 A.M. Registration - CVM Lobby | 1:00–4:30 P.M. General Session - Main Auditorium

Start Time	End Time	Topic	Speaker
1:00	1:15	Welcome/ Housekeeping	Mack Walker
1:15	2:30	Enterococcus Panel	Dr. Rachel Thiemann, Koch Foods; Dr. Ahmad Mueez, Church & Dwight; Dr. Martha Pulido-Landinez, MSU PRDL; Dr. Kevin Kessler, Tyson Foods
2:30	3:00	Break	
3:00	4:00	ILT: What We Learned	Dr. Randi Cran, Wayne-Sanderson Farms; Dr. Jim Watson, MBAH; Dr. Natalie Manginsay, MSU PRDL; Dr. Rachel Thiemann, Koch Foods
4:00	4:30	Ventilation	Jody Purswell, USDA ARS
5:30	6:00	Board Buses to VFW	
6:00	-	Hospitality Time	

May 15, 2024

7:30–11:00 A.M. Registration - MSU Poultry Science Department

Assorted pastries and biscuits will be served

Start Time	End Time	Topic	Speaker
8:00	8:15	Poultry Science Update	Ken Macklin, MSU Poultry Science
8:15	9:45	Communications Social Styles/ personality training	Cade Reynolds, Elanco
9:45	10:15	Break	
10:15	10:45	IBH	Dr. Tim Cummings, Zoetis
10:45	11:15	Litter Management	Jonathan Moon, MSU Poultry Science
11:15	11:45	Water- the Forgotten Nutrient	Dr. Ahmad Mueez, Church & Dwight
11:45	12:00	Buses to Poultry Science Department	
12:00	-	Lunch	

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WAYNESBORO'S MISSISSIPPI FRIED CHICKEN CHOSEN AS THE STATE'S BEST FRIED CHICKEN

Lauren Fortenberry, MPA Event Coordinator

Who has the best fried chicken in Mississippi? According to those voting in a Mississippi Poultry Association Facebook poll and a taste-testing team, it is Mississippi Fried Chicken in Waynesboro.

As soon as the open sign is on, people line up on Mississippi Drive in Waynesboro to get their fried chicken as early as 8 in the morning. You can expect a line at Mississippi Fried Chicken till 7 p.m. The popular restaurant has been in the McCarty family since 1987.

The restaurant has 20 employees and besides fried chicken, the restaurant also serves burgers, fish, BBQ, and many delicious sides. Alice McCarty, the owner, said the secret to her chicken is "it's marinated for 24 hours before it's cooked."

MPA Board Chair Mack Walker of Tyson Foods and Past Chair Bobby James of Amick Farms presented a plaque to the McCarty's at the Dixie National Rodeo.

The other two restaurants in the finals for the Best Fried Chicken in Mississippi were Annie M's in

Flora and Pap's in Grenada. More than 100 independently-owned restaurants statewide were nominated by customers during the fall of 2023.



"It was a hard decision but we certainly did our due diligence as a tasting team by visiting all three during the lunch hour on days when fried chicken was on the menu," said Tyson's Mack Walker, MPA Chairman of the Board, and one of the taste testers.

Other restaurants that were submitted were:

- Aunt Jenny's Country Buffet, Lucedale
- Dinner Bell, Waynesboro
- Jean's, Meridian
- Mama Hamil's, Madison
- Shivers Creek Fish House, Crystal Springs

The Mississippi Poultry Association would like to thank everyone that voted and shared our contest. Make sure to swing by Mississippi Fried Chicken in

Waynesboro and try their famous fried chicken! ■



Left to right: Past MPA Chair Bobby James, owner's granddaughter Ellen Koen, Owner's daughter Meagan McCarty Koen, Owner of Mississippi Fried Chicken Alice McCarty, and current MPA Chair Mack Walker.



EGGS AND CHICKEN PART OF A MID-DAY BREAK FOR LEGISLATOR'S, STAFF

Lauren Fortenberry, MPA Event Coordinator

The Mississippi Poultry Association and the Mississippi Egg Marketing Board hosted their Legislative Luncheon on February 21, 2024.

The event at Galloway United Methodist Church in Jackson drew 200 guests including over 40 legislators. Most of the other attendees were legislative staff who had their omelets prepared by legislators serving as guest chefs.

Attendees were greeted by Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) and MPA employees. Dr. Ryn Laster, MPA Past Chair and current Chair of the Mississippi Egg Marketing Board welcomed guests. MPA

President Mark Leggett explained the scope of the poultry and egg industry in Mississippi

Local television chef Deborah Hunter did a demonstration on how to cook an omelet! Guests lined up to ask legislators and MDAC'S Youth Council to cook their customized omelet. Salad, fruit, and chicken tenders were also on the menu! Thank you Wayne-Sanderson Farms for donating the chicken for this fabulous event!

Attendees were given a bag that contained logo items from MPA, member companies, and the Egg Marketing Board. ■



YOUR POULTRY LOAN EXPERT

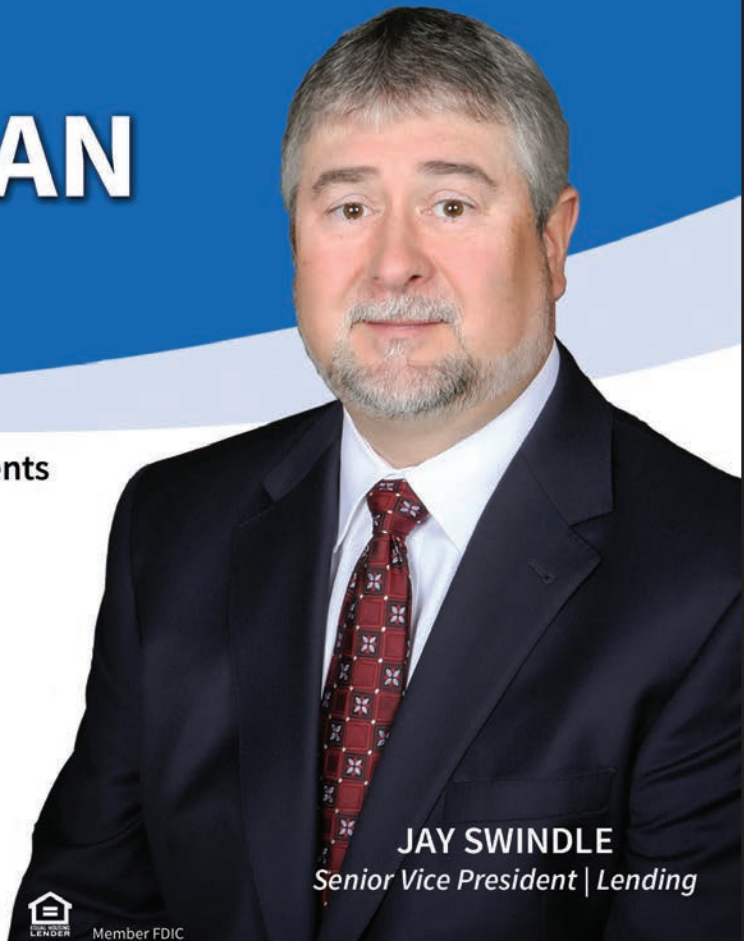
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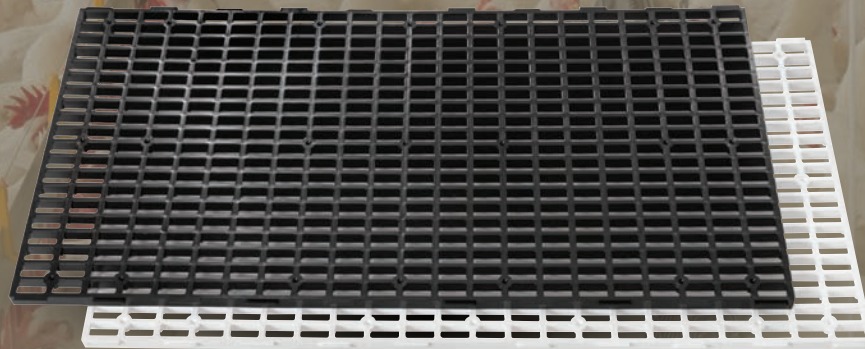


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All production is done at this facility, which allows for complete control over the entire manufacturing process. From the synthesizing of all active ingredients in the rodent bait, to the technologically advanced injection molders and robotics used for bait stations and mechanical traps.

Heavy investments in robotics and other high speed assembly equipment allow us to deliver products of unrivaled quality while maintaining our low-cost producer standards. Seamlessly integrating our manufacturing operations with our modern, efficient finished goods and shipping warehouse allows us to fill most orders within 24 hours.

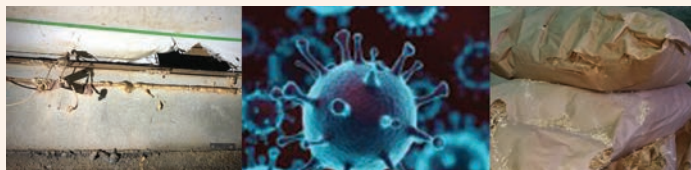
When margins are tight, the loss in feed efficiency can directly impact profitability and the bottom line. Some producers only worry about a rodent problem after it's too late. By building a regular control program into your operation as a fixed cost, it prevents problems from happening and saves you money in the long run.

Rodent control is an integral part of any biosecurity program. The highest price you pay for having rats and mice on your premises is the health risk they pose to your livestock. Rodents can be reservoirs for disease, which can live inside the rodent's body and be excreted in their urine and feces. They are also a mechanical vector, transferring pathogens between animals and buildings.

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- Curtain & Insulation—increases energy costs and repairs are expensive

Disease

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- Poultry (Salmonellosis, Cholera)
- Rodents cause several million dollars of disease related losses each year in poultry and swine operations

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- Veterinary services and medications
- Sanitizing and disinfecting facilities
- Lost productivity or depopulation
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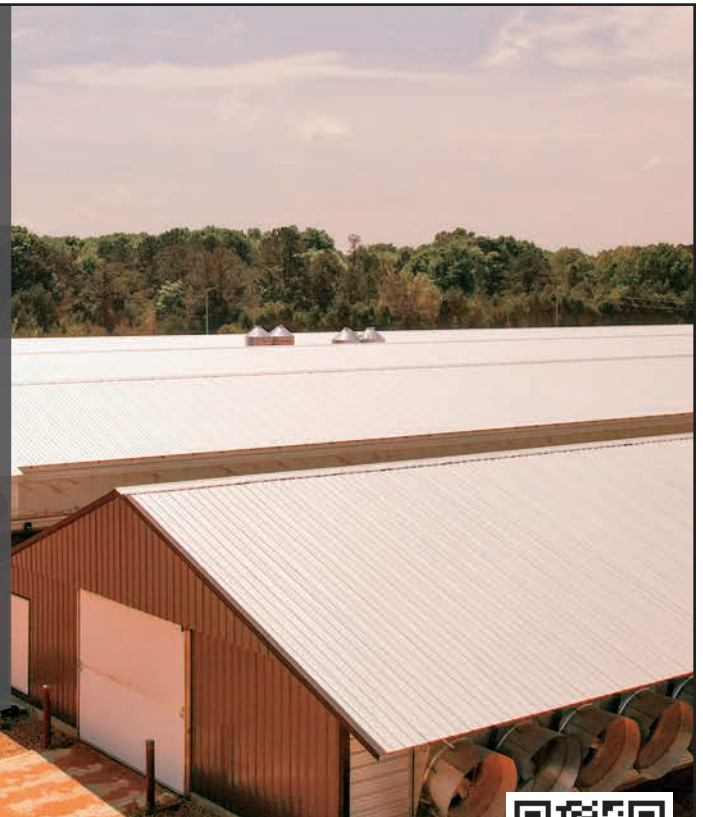
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MAFES SCIENTISTS WORK TO KEEP POULTRY HOUSES SAFE DURING SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS

By Sam Hughes, Mississippi State University

The On a steamy summer night, winds howl, straining the metal siding of a broiler house as rain thunders against its roof. The ventilation system drones as dim lights shine on tens of thousands of chickens along the house's dusty interior.

A flash of light flares from underneath the barn door, thunder roaring as the house's lights flicker out. Massive fans slow as the ventilation system loses power. Thousands of birds sit in darkness, rapidly consuming a limited oxygen supply as the interior temperature rises. With environmental control systems offline, farmers could experience rapid losses.

Within moments of the outage, the backup generator kicks online, and the ventilation system hums back to life—but not all broiler houses are so lucky in the face of extreme weather. A series of tornadoes swept through southern Mississippi on Easter Sunday of 2020, damaging or destroying nearly 100 broiler houses.

Dr. Daniel Chesser, assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering and Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES) scientist, said as broiler houses increase automation, costs of construction, maintenance, and insurance also increase, as well as their susceptibility to lightning damage.

Mississippi State University (MSU) alumnus Matthew Rowland collaborated with Chesser on two studies investigating the risk lightning poses to the industry for his master's thesis. In one study, Chesser and Rowland built a comprehensive lightning strike density map of Alabama and Mississippi using historical data furnished from VAISALA's National Lightning Detection Network.

"One goal of this research was to understand the lightning patterns from a geographic standpoint, and from a temporal standpoint throughout the year. We wanted a better understanding of what geographic areas experience the most lightning, and what areas are at higher or lower risk depending on the time of day and year," Chesser said. "That's important for insurance companies when performing risk analysis and determining insurance premiums."

The lightning mapping study found that more than 50% of annual lightning strikes occur during the summer, and that they were more common at night. Coastal regions experience increased lightning strikes, and as Mississippi's broiler farm density is elevated in the central-southern area of the state, these farms face an enhanced risk of lightning strikes.

Increased payouts due to extreme weather events and overall economic uncertainty have caused insurance companies to charge higher premiums to reduce their

economic risk. MAFES scientists found that 40 percent of chicken growers reported a premium increase of 10 percent or higher, and some insurers have refused to issue policies for broiler production.

Chesser said that technology in precision agriculture and precision livestock management is rapidly advancing, with new artificial intelligence, robotics, and automated systems being developed. Responsible management could prevent damage to these emerging and expensive technologies.

"The more electronic, automated systems we incorporate into the production process, the more important it's going to be to properly ground these systems," Chesser said. "We can't really prevent the lightning, but there are things we can do—like proper grounding systems and annual inspections—to mitigate the damage should a strike occur."

If a broiler house is equipped with a proper grounding system, in the event of a lightning strike, excess voltage passes through the grounding system and into the earth. If the grounding system is not fully functional, this excess voltage could escape to the earth through digital controllers, electric motors or other electrical equipment, causing heavy damage.

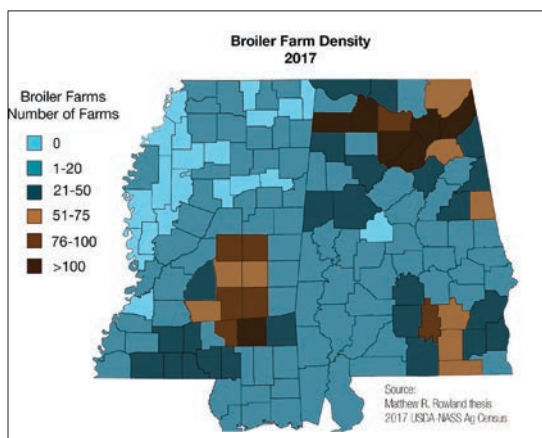
To fully understand the vulnerabilities of Mississippi poultry producers, Rowland and Chesser, working with colleagues from Auburn University and USDA Agricultural Research Service's Poultry Research Unit conducted a field survey of grounding systems in Mississippi and Alabama.

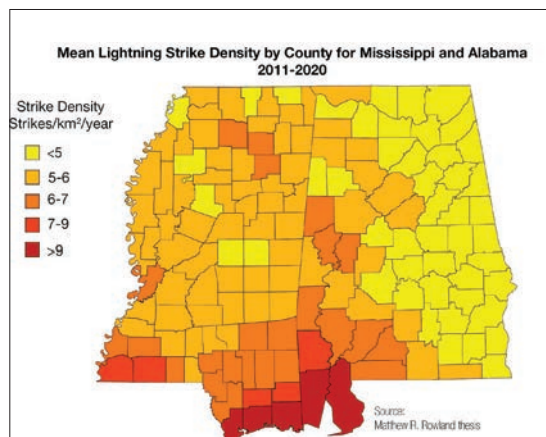
Ninety-six broiler houses across 14 farms were visited to collect data on house age, grounding system type, and earth ground resistance—a measure of how effective the systems were at diverting voltage.

"We wanted a current snapshot of how growers are protecting their operations. Over 65% of houses were up to code—and that's fantastic. Farmers are being proactive in protecting their investments," Rowland said. "One grower was telling us how his operation had upgraded his control systems on his farm in recent years. If lightning knocks out those control systems, you have to act quickly to keep the birds alive."

Rowland emphasized the importance of annual inspections, especially before the summer months. If connections are loose or corroded, grounding systems could prove ineffective when lightning strikes.

In the wake of the lightning strike modeling research, the MSU Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering is working on using data from the National





Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Iowa Environmental Mesonet to create an extreme weather climate model to evaluate extreme weather event frequency and impact on housing design requirements for U.S. broiler

producing regions.

“Once we complete this database, we’ll be able to see where and how severe weather events affect the resiliency of agricultural production systems across the U.S. Heat advisories, cold advisories, snowstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes—any type of severe weather event we might encounter,” Chesser said. “We can try and determine the probabilities of how extreme weather events might negatively affect agricultural producers across the U.S.”

As precision livestock management grows within the broiler industry, MAFES researchers are at the forefront, gathering real data to support improved industry management practices that will keep the lights on in broiler houses across the nation.

“Poultry is a protein that’s continuing to increase in consumption in the U.S., and worldwide,” Chesser said. “As a land grant institution, the focus of our research is to help the producer, to help the industry grow and become more profitable.” ■

This research is funded by the USDA Agricultural Research Service’s Poultry Research Unit. MAFES scientists work closely with USDA-ARS scientists to improve productivity and profitability of Mississippi’s poultry industry.

BENEFITS OF MPA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

MPA Grower members receive several benefits from the Association, especially important are government relations and grower relations. The Association works to support a unified industry and to represent the industry to our government and the public.

The poultry and egg industry will continue to face significant legislative and regulatory challenges in years to come. As regulations increase from USDA, FDA, EPA, Miss. DEQ, Miss. Dept. of Revenue, and other federal, state, and local agencies, MPA communicates on behalf of the industry to legislators and regulators.

MPA has a solid track record of accomplishments helping growers reduce costs and regulatory burdens.

Just a few examples are:

- Eliminating the sales tax on electricity, propane, and natural gas for plants and for farms.
- Lowering the sales tax on farm equipment and parts and labor for repairs to farm implements to 1.5%. This includes poultry house equipment and parts.
- Working with the Department of Environmental Quality to reduce paperwork for permits.
- Passing legislation preventing local governments from adding additional environmental regulations beyond what is required by the state.

- Doubling the amount farmers can borrow interest-free from the Emerging Crops Loan Program.
- Passing legislation to prevent local governments from imposing bans on food items so preventing a patchwork of local menu requirements.
- Working to maintain and increase funding for MSU divisions important to poultry.

Further Benefits

- Four issues of *Emerging Trends* newsletter.
- Opportunity for your child or grandchild to receive one of four \$4,000 Scholarships awarded each year.
- Four growers are members of the MPA Board of Directors, and the chairman of the Grower Advisory Committee is a member of the Executive Committee.
- Free attendance to all MPA seminars, including Management School at Mississippi State (May 14th and 15th). A two-day event where growers and service technicians learn about the latest advancements and techniques in our industry. We hope you will make the decision to become a part of the Mississippi Poultry Association and help us to maintain our position as the #1 Agricultural Commodity in the State of Mississippi.

Please contact Lauren Fortenberry **601-932-7560** or fortenberry@mspoultry.org for more information. ■



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NEW FEDERAL CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY ACT REQUIRES SMALLER FARM BUSINESSES TO PROVIDE OWNERSHIP INFORMATION

John Milner, MPA Counsel
Brunini Grantham Grower and Hewes



Poultry farms are among the small businesses included in new reporting requirements under a federal law Congress passed to combat money laundering.

On January 1, 2024, The Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) took effect with the primary purpose of combatting money laundering, illicit financial transactions, and financial terrorism. The CTA established the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) in the U.S. Department of Treasury to oversee a national registry of information on owners of entities that are exempt from conventional disclosure regulations. The CTA requires many businesses formed or operating in the United States to report information about their “beneficial owners” to FinCEN. This new law will affect many farms and small businesses.

Any entity that is required to be registered with the Mississippi Secretary of State will be considered a Reporting Company and subject to the CTA. Generally, this means LLCs, corporations and limited partnerships, common entities for farms, are all subject to the CTA. There are some types of businesses that are exempt from the CTA, such as banks and accounting firms, but farms are not exempt.

The CTA primarily targets small businesses. Therefore, an exemption is provided for large operating companies. Companies that meet the following conditions are exempt from the CTA reporting requirements:

1. employs more than 20 fulltime employees in the United States
2. has an operating presence at a physical office within the United States; and
3. Filed a Federal income tax or information return in the United States for the previous year demonstrating more than \$5M in gross receipts or sales.

Every Reporting Company must provide FinCEN with information for each and every beneficial owner of the business. A beneficial owner is any owner that exercises substantial control or owns at least 25 percent of the business. The information required for each beneficial owner is as follows:

- Full legal name.
- Date of birth.
- Complete current address.
- Unique identifying number and issuing jurisdiction from one of the following, along with its image:
 - U.S. passport.
 - State driver's license.
 - Identification document issued by a state, local government or tribe.

Each Reporting Company must submit an initial filing but also must update the filing if there is any change to the required information about the business or beneficial owners. For example, if a beneficial owner has a change of address or obtains a new driver's license, the Reporting Company must update the report with FinCEN. Both the initial report and updates are filed through the FinCEN website portal at www.fincen.gov/boi.

So, what does this all mean for farm businesses? The CTA and beneficial owner reporting requirements may seem like an intrusion of privacy. It is, in fact, an intrusion of privacy, but Congress has determined that the intrusion is necessary to protect against money laundering, illicit financial transactions, and financial terrorism. Right or wrong, the CTA is now law and farm businesses must follow it to avoid penalties.

The process of reporting should not be overly difficult using the FinCEN online portal. However, the reporting will take time, especially for entities with many owners. While the entity should already have each owner's name, address, and ownership percentage, collecting an image of each owner's identification document could be time consuming. All businesses required to report under the CTA should develop a plan to file the initial report, monitor reportable changes, and file updated reports. Attorneys, accountants, lenders, and other professionals working with farms should also help remind their clients of the need for the initial reporting and future, updated reports. The CTA reporting is a significant change in business entity management and it may take the entire business team to ensure compliance. ■

KILGORE AND GRISHAM WIN 2024 FIRST FINANCIAL BANK SCHOLARSHIPS



Grisham

The winners of the 2024 First Financial scholarships are Hayden Kilgore of Taylorsville, MS, and William Grisham of Arab, AL. For the 15th year in a row, First Financial Bank donated \$1,500 to the Mississippi Poultry Foundation for two scholarship recipients

The Foundation's Scholarship Committee, composed of educators chose the recipients.

"First Financial Bank is glad to assist these future leaders in the poultry industry with their education at MSU," Michael Barnes, FFB senior vice president, said. "We are proud to be a supporter of the Mississippi Poultry



Kilgore

Foundation's efforts to assist poultry science students with their education."

Kilgore, who won the \$1,000 scholarship split over two semesters is currently attending MSU pursuing a degree in poultry science and plans to enter the poultry industry.

Grisham, who won a \$500 scholarship split over two semesters, is currently attending MSU pursuing a degree in poultry science and plans to become a poultry veterinarian.

First Financial Bank has provided \$22,500 in scholarships to 33 students since the creation of the FFB Mississippi Poultry Foundation scholarship in 2010. ■

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DR. WALLACE MORGAN IS 2024 CALS DISTINGUISHED FELLOW

The newest MSU CALS Distinguished Fellow is MPA Board member and former head of the MSU Poultry Science Department Dr. Wallace Morgan.



The departments in the MSU College of Agriculture and Life Sciences choose a distinguished fellow to be revealed at a banquet each spring.

Dr. Morgan has served on the MPA Board since he was chosen to head the MSU Poultry Science Department and continues to serve on the MPA Board as an ex officio advisory member. He was named to the Mississippi Poultry Hall of Fame in 2007.

Dr. Morgan earned his Bachelor of Science in Poultry Science in 1964, Master of Science in Animal Physiology in 1966, and his Doctor of Philosophy in Animal Physiology in 1970 from MSU. His research and regulatory efforts at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, helped produce the first set of proposed standards for a genetic test used to match patients and donors for bone marrow, cord blood, and organ transplant.

Morgan then joined the poultry science department at North Carolina State University before being recruited by MSU in 1980 to update the university's poultry science curriculum and increase undergraduate enrollment. His work at MSU led to exponential enrollment increases, and he received four teaching and advising awards, becoming department head in 1987. He continued strengthening the university's poultry science department, developing a close working relationship with the Mississippi poultry industry. He considers the students who are the industry's leaders as the department's largest contribution to Mississippi poultry.

In a 2012 interview on the history of the poultry industry, he said of MSU's impact "I would say the largest impact

that we've had has come through the students that have come through here. Many have become real leaders and developers of the industry."

He received four teaching and advising awards at MSU, and is the author or co-author of more than 80 research publications and abstracts. Morgan retired in 2007 and remained in Starkville. An endowed poultry science scholarship was funded in his honor by friends and colleagues.

The first five MSU Poultry Science Distinguished Fellows are: Dr. Karen Christensen, senior director of animal welfare for Tyson Foods; Sherman L. Miller, President and Chief Operations Officer of Cal-Maine Foods, the nation's largest producer and distributor of fresh shell eggs; and Steve McLaurin, special projects manager for Peco Foods, Dr. Ryn Laster, director of food safety and animal welfare at Cal-Maine Foods, Inc., and Dr. Sue Ann Hubbard, a veterinarian with her own consulting firm.

Dr. Morgan received four teaching and advising awards at MSU, and is the author or co-author of more than 80 research



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John Milner serves as counsel to the Mississippi Poultry Association and has special expertise in poultry-related environmental issues. Partner Gene Wasson also has impressive abilities in the environmental sector. Partner Trey Jones has significant environmental litigation experience.

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TWO POULTRY SCIENCE STUDENTS WIN 2024 FIRST SOUTH FARM CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP



Kilgore



Grisham

The winners of the 2024 First South Farm Credit scholarships are Hayden Kilgore of Taylorsville, Mississippi, and William Grisham of Arab, Alabama

For the 5th year in a row, First South Farm Credit donated \$2,000 for two scholarships to the Mississippi Poultry Foundation (MPF). The Foundation's Scholarship committee composed of educators chose the recipients.

Grisham has plans to become a poultry veterinarian, and Kilgore, whose parents are Amick Farms Growers, intends to work in the poultry industry.

"For more than 100 years, First South Farm Credit has been focused on strengthening agriculture in Mississippi. The scholarships we have funded through the Mississippi Poultry Foundation will help strengthen Mississippi's poultry industry. This will make a real difference in educating the next generation of poultry industry leaders," said J.C. Simmons, marketing & business development specialist with the Mississippi Division of First South Farm Credit.

The First South Farm Credit Scholarship, the most recent one created through the MPF, has assisted 10 students with \$1,000 scholarships since it was created in 2020. ■

CHICKEN/SAUSAGE GUMBO

Recipe by Debbie Rhodes

INGREDIENTS

- 4-5 LB CHICKEN AND SMOKED SAUSAGE, BOIL CHICKEN UNTIL JUST TENDER ENOUGH TO REMOVE FROM BONE WITH GLOVES. SAVE BROTH FOR LATER.
- 1 1/2 CUPS CHOPPED CELERY, 3 RIBS
- 1 LARGE GREEN PEPPER, CHOPPED
- 1 MEDIUM ONION, CHOPPED
- 1 SMALL BUNCH GREEN ONION, CHOPPED
- 3 GARLIC CLOVES
- 1 CUP FLOUR
- 1 CUP OIL
- 1 TBSP WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE
- 1/2 CUP CHOPPED PARSLEY OR FLAKES
- SALT & PEPPER, TO TASTE
- 3 CHICKEN BROTH, PLUS WATER TO EQUAL 3 QUARTS
- 1 CUP OKRA

PREPARATION

1. Boil and debone chicken using gloves. Reserve broth for later.
2. Slice sausage into bite sizes and boil just a little of the grease off.
3. Make roux by heating oil in a heavy pot. Gradually add flour, stirring continuously until well mixed. Lower heat and continue stirring until roux is chocolate brown.
4. Add chopped celery, green pepper, onions, and garlic and cook about 5 minutes until wilted. Reserve okra for last hour of simmering.
5. Add broth and water to equal 3 quarts.
6. Add deboned chicken and sausage.
7. Add Worcestershire Sauce, Parsley, and season to taste.
8. Simmer 1 hour then add okra and simmer for another hour.
9. Serve over Rice with Mexican Cornbread.



Debbie and Kevin Rhodes

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

*At all events involving growers, please
practice strict biosecurity procedures*

*The Grower Advisory Committee will meet
quarterly at the call of the Chairman.*

■ Poultry Management School

MAY 14-15, 2024
Wise Center
240 Wise Center Drive
Mississippi State, MS

■ Breeder/Hatchery Seminar

AUGUST 6, 2024
Location TBD

■ MPA 87th Convention SEPTEMBER 12-15, 2024 Hilton Sandestin Resort, Destin, FL

Growers can attend convention for \$50, all other events are free

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