



1776 to 2026, Who We Are

by Rosanne Brown

Admittedly, if one were to travel back to the year 1776, the Mississippi we know would not exist. Mississippi territory would not be added to the United States of America until 1788, taken in as a part of Georgia, and then we took on a few other shapes until finally becoming what we know as our state in 1817. But from the beginning, these Mississippi lands were recognized as having fertile, nutritious soil blessed with the abilities to grow native crops along with an abundance of wildlife and natural resources, all hidden and guarded by a vast wilderness.

The indigenous people to this territory, Native Americans, comprised primarily of Chickasaw, Choctaw, & Natchez tribes, were intimately aware of the simple, yet rich, environment that sustained them season to season, year to year. The land was etched with creeks and rivers containing fish and offering a quicker means of travel across the wild terrain, including the largest of them all, the Mississippi River, creating a bountiful, rich Delta in the western part of the territory and providing trade routes north to south for several territories. It was abundant with wildlife such as deer, turkey, quail, and rabbit, and inhabitants took advantage of native plants by cultivating maize, known as corn, squash, & beans. This trio of crops are known as "the three sisters". Tobacco and indigo were used for native commerce. Nature also provided natural sweets such as blueberries, blackberries, muscadine grapes, pawpaw, persimmons, and wild honey. These are still hard to resist treats when out on the trail or while perusing a Mississippi fence line or roadside.

Soon, along with trappers & traders, mostly French & English settlers arrived with saws in hand, looking to make a clearing in the dense woods, utilizing the timber for the establishment of the homesteads and the newly revealed open ground of fertile soil for family garden plots. With this came the introduction of non-native crops to the Mississippi landscape, along with domesticated livestock, such as the family cow or goat for milking, pigs for meat, sheep for wool, or chickens for eggs. This increased the need for what we commonly know as row crops. Corn, oats, rye, rice, and potatoes were grown to help supplement the diets of the homesteaders and their livestock. Also flax and cotton was planted and harvested for clothing, bedding, and household supplies.

With the influx of settlers came the need to tame more of the wilderness by cutting trees to provide shelter, tools, and implements. This was one of many times we would potentially squander the land's natural resources, and restoration of those resources would be left to future generations. Author James Schouler, in *Americans of 1776*, circa 1906, noted, "Too much

(continued Page 2)

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1776 to 2026, Who We Are
- Cattle Market News
- Forestry News
- What's News
- July/August County Events Calendar
- Lee County Extension Service Links & Contact Information



5338 CLIFF GOOKIN BLVD., TUPELO, MS 38801

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination in university employment, programs, or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by applicable law is prohibited.

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. ANGUS L. CATCHOT JR., Director

1776 to 2026, Who We Are (continued)

wood was cut, however, and cut ruthlessly; and we are now only just beginning to learn that forests should be preserved and cultivated as permanent investment, by careful choice and selection for harvest."

As rudimentary technologies, such as hoes, harrows, & plows were refined by the talents and innovations of rising metallurgists, blacksmiths, and mechanical engineers, the ability to grow, maintain, harvest, and ship row crops increased. These became commodities, easily traded both home and even shipped abroad, regularly exporting grains to the "Old World." Soon the land was put to use by cultivating what we describe as "cash crops", most notably cotton. Several varieties of the day grew particularly well in the fertile Mississippi soil. Unfortunately our desire for agriculture & economic growth with mechanical & agricultural advances of the times would precede some of the saddest years in our future Nation's history.

In 1776, in the Southern colonies, including the Mississippi territory, farmers were the soldiers enlisted in our Revolutionary War, and their pursuits through battles and numerous returns home, would be the spearhead leading us to an agricultural future. Be it soldiering, homesteading, or farming, day to day life was initiated by the farmer, whose sons helped in the fields while wife and daughters tended the livestock and home. For the times, we would recognize this as modern day land management & animal husbandry. They returned to what they knew best. James Schouler also laments, that mistakenly, "the policy of the mother country was to confine all her colonies as much as possible to agriculture and the simple kindred pursuits of hunting and fishing." With the natural resources from this territory, this was almost a gift, as opposed to punishment. Farmers would typically exchange meat, bread, cheese, butter, or grain either at the local store or market for needed goods & supplies. We can see glimpses of this past now with a simple trip to a local farmers' market, swap meet, or neighborhood shop.

"The labor and subduing of this earth and utilizing its products for the needs, the comforts, the luxuries of life, begins and continues with the development of typical man...", per Schouler, this "development of typical man" also included utilizing the guidance of almanacs. A few of the most popular almanacs of the time were "Poor Richard's", authored by Benjamin Franklin, "Poor Will's", & "Father Abraham's". These periodicals offered access to calendars, lunar & tidal dates, weather predictions, recipes, remedies, and even some anecdotal humor. In colonial times, the information on those printed pages may have been some of the best advice one could expect to receive. Today, we still have almanacs, but our educational resources expanded to include local weather, specialists, extension publications, and your local extension agent.

In summary, Mississippi has always had roots in forestry and agriculture, and the people who came before us endured wars, both civilly & globally, while creating homes and building a thriving agriculture economy that still includes row crop production in soybeans, cotton, corn, rice, peanuts, & sweet potatoes, with our two largest industries being poultry & forestry, and leading the nation in catfish production. From the revolution to unify our states, to the division & brokenness of a civil war, and then stepping up to bare a large burden in two world wars, the constitution of the people who have gone before us was fortified with resilience and determination. Schouler stated, "The whole tendency, then, of our primitive American life was to develop the natural affections and make people neighborly and helpful to one another, recognizing those common joys and sorrows of humanity of which all ages and conditions partook." As we endure, so does this land, always ready to absorb the sweat of our brow, the blood of our toil, and the bones of our ancestors; while, with our diligence, providing a richer more abundant future for those who will come next, taking up the weighty yoke of land stewardship and resource management. Two hundred fifty years later, there remains the shadow of who came before us, the knowledge of who we are now, and the celebration of what is yet to come. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY, AMERICA!**



Schouler, J. (1906). *Americans of 1776*. Dodd, Mead and Company

Wailles, B. L. C. (1854), *Report on the Agriculture and Geology of Mississippi*. E. Barksdale, State Printer.

Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine. (2026). 2025 *Annual Report*. Mississippi State University Agriculture Communications.

CATTLE MARKET NEWS

June Cattle on Feed at Four-Year High, Despite Sharply Lower Placements

Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky



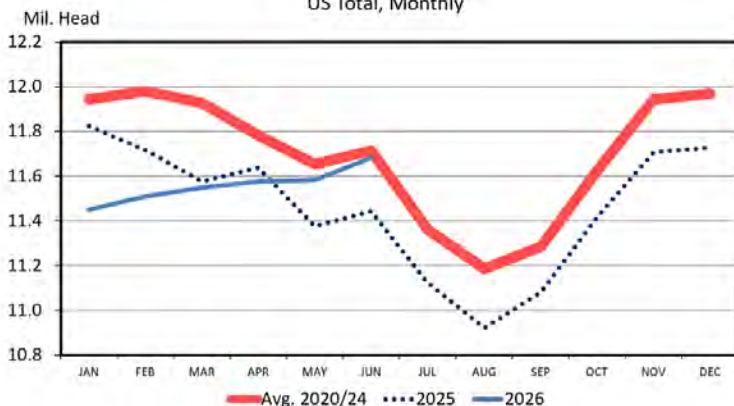
USDA-NASS released the June Cattle on Feed report on Friday afternoon, June 19th. Last week's report estimated June 1 inventories for feedlots with capacities exceeding 1,000 head. Feedlots of this size represent more than 80% of total on-feed inventory, so these monthly reports provide key insights into the supply dynamics of the cattle market. After running below year-ago levels since the end of 2024, total on-feed inventory was estimated above year-ago for the second straight month. At 11.68 million head, the June 1 inventory was just over 2% higher than last year. It is also noteworthy that this is the highest June 1 on feed estimate since 2022.

May placements were estimated at 1.7 million head, which is down almost 10% from last May. This stands in contrast to April placements, which were nearly 6% higher than in 2025. This difference suggests that the high April placement number was likely a function of dry conditions in much of the US. For the first five months of 2026, feedlot placements were down roughly 3% from the first five months of 2025, which provides a better perspective on placement patterns this year.

Marketings have not received as much attention as placements, but continue to be worth discussion. May marketings were down 12% from 2025 and are down 9.5% from January through May. This continues to be consistent with harvest patterns as steer and heifer slaughter are down 7% and 12% year-to-date, respectively. Beef cow slaughter has been down even more significantly, with dairy cow slaughter being the only category higher in 2026.

There continue to be a lot of moving parts to this cattle market. Cattle supplies remain tight, but on-feed inventory is relatively high. This is primarily a function of longer feeding times and sharply lower marketings this year. Higher slaughter weights are not significant enough to offset lower slaughter levels. USDA's most recent estimate in the World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) has beef production estimated to be down by more than 2% this year. This stands in contrast to what will likely be higher production levels for pork and broilers. Beef demand has been incredibly strong, and consumers have shown a lot of resilience in the face of very high retail prices. It appears that resilience will continue to be tested for the balance of 2026.

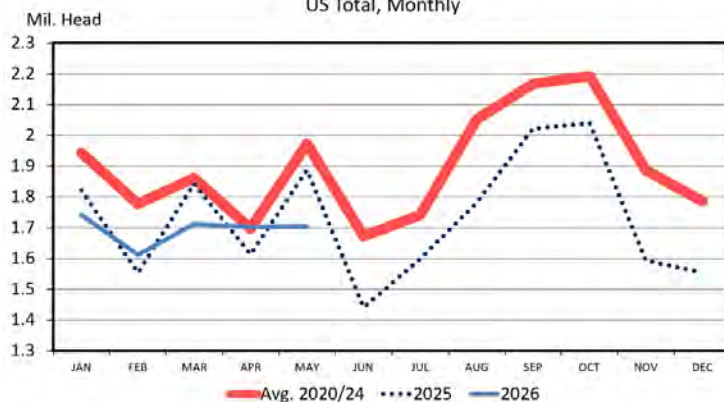
CATTLE ON FEED
US Total, Monthly



Data Source: USDA-NASS
Livestock Marketing Information Center

C4H-10
06/18/26

FEEDLOT PLACEMENTS
US Total, Monthly



Data Source: USDA-NASS
Livestock Marketing Information Center

C4H-08
06/18/26

Lee County Cattlemen Association connects local cattlemen and provides access to learning & knowledge for the betterment of their cattle herds, from farm to plate. The next meeting will be **Thursday, September 17th, 6 pm**, with Kelsey Harvey, for the fall. **Call 662-841-9000 by NOON the TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15TH, to RSVP.**

FORESTRY NOTES

Forestry/Wildlife Myths & Misconceptions

Revised by Brady Self, PhD, Extension Professor, Forestry, from an earlier version by Tim Traugott, PhD, Extension Professor Emeritus

(CONTINUED FROM May/June 2026 Lee Links)

Misconception #5: Clearcutting is bad for wildlife.

Another misconception commonly encountered is that clearcutting is “bad,” not sustainable, and strips all wildlife habitat from a property. This response to clearcutting has become almost a knee-jerk reaction by many over the last 50 years. Let’s look at the facts as we consider clearcutting’s place in wildlife management.

As a starting point, let’s consider clearcuts in general. Most people think of clearcutting as the end of a forest, but foresters regard clearcutting as a way to reproduce or begin a new stand. Clearcutting is the complete removal of all trees from a designated area and is the best regeneration method for sun-loving or shade-intolerant tree species, such as southern pine and many valuable hardwood species.

Oak species are shade intolerant and must have sunlight to regenerate and grow. Sprouts or seeds from a seed source must be present for them to regenerate. Once established, they need full sunlight for best growth. Without this sunlight, oak seedlings are eventually eliminated from a stand’s makeup (Figure 6). This basic trait has resulted in a loss of oaks from hardwood forests over time.

When hardwoods were harvested in the past, and in many cases today, larger trees were cut and smaller trees were left. This is not good forest management and is also poor wildlife management. Because good oak species are shade intolerant, they usually don’t persist in hardwood understories. Therefore, when large oak trees are cut, they are often replaced by other hardwood species less valuable to both timber and wildlife habitat goals. This is why some wildlife managers recommend small clearcuts in hardwood stands. The small clearcuts provide habitat diversity, understory browse, and plant growth, and most importantly, they provide for regeneration of oak species that require open sunlight (Figure 7 on next page).

Figure 6. This area has incredible early-summer willow oak regeneration after a bumper mast year. However, without additional sunlight, the vast majority of these germinants will die by the end of the summer.



FORESTRY NOTES (continued)

Forestry/Wildlife Myths & Misconceptions

Revised by Brady Self, PhD, Extension Professor, Forestry, from an earlier version by Tim Traugott, PhD, Extension Professor Emeritus

Figure 7. This photo shows typical vegetation found in a cutover 1 year after cutting. Note the presence of both herbaceous and woody food, as well as good cover for a variety of wildlife species. (Photo courtesy of Andrew Ezell)



Clearcutting is a valuable management tool for foresters and wildlife managers. Many wildlife species need diversity in their habitat. That is, they need open areas, large timber, and herbaceous vegetation in their natural home range. Often, this home range is relatively small, and it is hard to find these conditions on a small area. With the proper use of clearcutting, you can maintain diversity while creating and maintaining the “edge effect,” where two of the conditions meet.

Good clearcuts for wildlife are small, irregular in shape, and well-distributed over the tract of land being managed. You can use the clearcut to maintain the diverse habitat conditions required by wildlife while practicing good forest management.

Contrary to popular belief, clearcutting does provide benefits for many of our most important game species. For rabbits and deer, an abundance of food and cover is created. Quail benefit from an influx of food, thickets for nesting, and open vegetation. Cleared areas offer turkeys open grassy areas for summer food and brood rearing, as well as brushy areas for nesting. Clearcutting, however, virtually eliminates squirrel habitat and should not be used if squirrels are the major management consideration.

If you consider the different age classes of trees on your property and properly design and execute clearcuts in terms of size and shape for maximum diversity and spacing, you will see benefits to game populations. Clearcutting is not bad for all wildlife. In fact, when done properly, it provides many positive benefits for game.

We will explore the other common misconceptions in newsletters to follow. If you can't wait until then...

Explore this complete publication & more information on the extension website at:

<https://extension.msstate.edu/publications/forestrywildlife-myths-and-misconceptions>

Join us for the next Forestry meeting,

Monday, August 3rd, at 6 PM.

Call 662-841-9000 by 12 PM on Friday, July 31st to reserve your seat.



What's NEWS?



Want to learn more about gardening & help beautify Lee County?
Become a Lee County Master Gardener!

There will be a **Recruitment Meeting on July 22nd, 1-2 PM**, hosted by the Lee County Master Gardeners. This is open to anyone interested in learning more about the Master Gardener Program. Dr. Jeff Wilson, State Master Gardener Coordinator, will present information during a statewide Zoom session, then you'll have the opportunity to meet a few of our Lee County Master Gardeners and learn about their volunteer service. Please join us **at North MS Research and Extension Center at 5421 Hwy 145S in Verona.**



Master Gardener Course Registration opens August 12th & closes September 9th. The self-paced course is online and conducted from October 1st through December 10th. The Lee County Master Gardener Program offers the opportunity to help extend the educational arm of the university to the public by providing horticultural information based on university research publications.



Please feel free to share this information with a horticulture enthusiast you may know! **For more information contact Susan McGukin at 662-841-9000.**



EXHIBIT DAYS COMING SOON!



It is almost here! Mark your calendars for **Monday, August 31st through Wednesday, September 2nd, at The Tupelo Children's Mansion.** We look forward to all the Adult & Youth Exhibits! You may register by picking up your Exhibitor Pack starting Monday, July 13th until Wednesday, August 26th, at the Lee County Extension Office, 5338 Cliff Gookin Blvd., Tupelo. **After Wednesday, August 26th, at 5 PM, REGISTRATION WILL BE CLOSED.** Please feel free to call 662-841-9000 with any questions.

2026 NMREC VEGETABLE FIELD DAY

WHEN

**Wednesday, July 8, 2026
8:30 am – 11:45 am**

WHERE

**North Mississippi Research
and Extension Center**

5421 MS-145, Verona, MS 38879

TOPICS

Join us as we visit the ongoing research in multiple vegetable production systems, including Tomatoes, Sweetcorn, Basil, and Pepper. Field Day will also include information on variety trials, nutrient, water, and disease management.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Timothy Ayankojo

662-566-2201 / ita10@msstate.edu

**The event
and lunch
are free, but
registration
is required**

Register at



**EVENT OPEN TO
FARMERS AND
VEGETABLE
PRODUCERS
THROUGHOUT
THE
SOUTHEAST!**



SUMMER WEBINAR SERIES

Cattle over Coffee

SAVE THE DATES at 11 am

June 16-Dr. Josh Maples
June 23-Dr. Genevieve D'Souza
June 30-Dr. Brandi Karisch
July 16-Dr. Christine Navarre
July 21- Dr. Carla Huston
July 30-Dr. Barbara dos Reis

Grab a cup and join us on Zoom

Topics will include mineral nutrition, heifer development, parasites, new world screwworm, farm direct beef, and economics.



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION



✓ You can register for the remaining webinars by clicking on the link below and following the registration prompts.

http://extension.msstate.edu/beef?fbclid=IwZXhobgNhZWwCMTAAAYnJpZBExZEJIY1Q2QTRjd2FlcjFTcXNyYGMGYXBwX2lkEDlyMjAzOTE3ODgyMDA4OTIAAR4Xx9GLEta_Uhl_DmBlpDWx5U4mm2gQSANslXoodhWoV6oZxxPn3gRoJe6oZQ_aem_B17P3BIEKedb-Orup-ywbA

✓ The webinars will also be archived on our YouTube page as well. You may access them using this link.

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6wbZ6rjYb3JXzYbPLngJt1TULD67jrp_&si=oDB2Hlpcs6pfoCAR

White-tailed Deer Management Evening Seminar

7.22.26

5:30 PM to 8 PM

Oxford Conference Center

102 Ed Perry Blvd

Oxford, Mississippi

Topics Include

Nutrition

Herd Dynamics

DMAP Data

Q & A Session

**[Click
Here to
Register](#)**

**\$10 Registration fee
Includes catered meal
Register by July 15 to
secure your meal
ticket**

**1.5 Cat 1 CFE credit
hours available**



**For questions about this event or registration issues contact Mabrey
Briscoe at the Lafayette County Extension Office, 662.234.4451**

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination in university employment, programs or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by applicable law is prohibited. For more information, please contact the Office of Civil Rights Compliance.



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION

Pumpkin Pest Management

July 22, 2026; 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

North Mississippi Research and Extension Center

5421 MS-145, Verona, MS 38879



Rebecca Melanson

Join MSU Extension plant pathologist **Dr. Rebecca Melanson** and MSU Extension entomologist **Dr. Jermaine Perier** to learn about current disease and insect problems and management recommendations for commercial pumpkins in Mississippi! This event is **FREE**, but we ask that you register in advance to assist with planning.

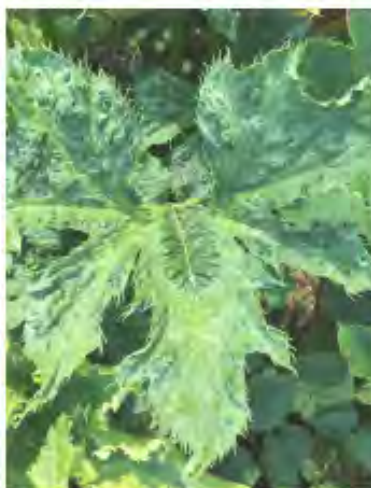


Jermaine Perier

Mississippi State University Extension will provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency. Language access services, such as interpretation and translation of vital information, will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request. Contact our office (601-857-2284; rebecca.melanson@msstate.edu) two to three weeks prior to the event to request reasonable accommodations.

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination in university employment, programs, or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by applicable law is prohibited.

REGISTER NOW





NORTH MISSISSIPPI RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER

ROW CROP FIELD DAY

Registration starts at 8:00am on Thursday, August 20, 2026 in the NMREC Office Complex with the program beginning at 8:30am. Interact with researchers and Extension Specialists with crop specific updates from around the state as we tour the research farm. Breakfast and lunch will be served.

**Call 662-566-2201 or email
ab5020@msstate.edu for more
information.**

EVENT DETAILS



**August 20, 2026
8:30am**



**NMREC
5421 MS-145 South
Verona, MS 38879**



**MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY™**

**NORTH MISSISSIPPI RESEARCH
& EXTENSION CENTER**

07



EXTENSION

JULY



2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	01	02 CLOSING AT NOON	03 OFFICE CLOSED	04
05	06 Rabbit Club 5-18 4PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	07	08	09 Expressive Arts 8-13 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	10	11
12	13	14	15 Sewing Club 2 Beginner 10-18 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	16	17 State 4-H Shooting Sports Contest Jackson, MS	18 State 4-H Shooting Sports Contest Jackson, MS
19	20	21 AGRIVENTURE 8-13 10 AM - 2 PM Sewing Club 1 Advanced 10-18 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	22 AGRIVENTURE 8-13 10 AM - 2 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office MG Recruitment 1-2 PM NMREC Verona	23 AGRIVENTURE 8-13 10 AM - 2 PM Junior Master Gardener 8-13 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	24	25
26	27	28	29 Crochet Workshop 10-18 9-11 AM Lee Co. Ext. Office	30 Southern Regional 4-H Horse Show Perry, GA	31 Southern Regional 4-H Horse Show Perry, GA	01

06



EXTENSION

AUGUST



2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30	31	01 Southern Regional 4-H Horse Show Perry, GA
02	03 Forestry 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	04 Foodies 9-18 5 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office Back Kitchen	05 Crochet Club 10-18 4:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	06	07	08
09	10 Cloverbuds 5-7 & Jr Leaf 8-13 4:30 PM Rabbit Club 5-18 5:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	11 Aggies 8-18 4 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	12 Online Registration for Master Gardener Course Opens through September 9th	13 Expressive Arts 8-13 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	14	15
16	17 Ropes & Reins 8-18 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	18 Sewing Club 1 Advanced 10-18 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	19	20 Sewing Club 2 Beginner 10-18 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	21	22
23	24 STEM Club 5-13 4:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	25	26	27 Junior Master Gardener 8-13 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	28	29
30	31 EXHIBIT DAYS Drop Off Tupelo Children's Mansion	01 EXHIBIT DAYS Judging & Open House Tupelo Children's Mansion	02 EXHIBIT DAYS Pick up Tupelo Children's Mansion	03	04	05

We also offer many opportunities for youth ages 5-18 in our 4-H programs.

Lee County Extension Office Staff:

Warner Creekmore
warner.creekmore@msstate.edu

Jan Garrett
jan.garrett@msstate.edu

Cassandra Hainsworth
cassandra.hainsworth@msstate.edu

Susan McGukin
susan.mcgukin@msstate.edu

Rosanne Brown
rosanne.brown@msstate.edu

Contact Us:



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION



662-841-9000



5338 Cliff Gookin Blvd.
Tupelo, MS 38801



www.extension.msstate.edu



<https://www.facebook.com/leecountyextensionms>



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

MISSISSIPPI STATE, MISSISSIPPI 39762-5446
PO BOX 5446

EXTENSION

MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY™