

# FOCUS

## Teaching, Research and Outreach in the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine

Mississippi State University, originally named Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical College, was founded in 1878 to serve as the state's land-grant institution. As it succeeded in its mission, the school became known as "The People's College."

There is still a close identity with the people it serves at Mississippi State, especially in the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine. The units in the division focus on activities that benefit people, whether they live down a country lane or in an urban high-rise.

There are six units in the division: the Mississippi State University Extension Service, the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, the College of Veterinary Medicine, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Forest Resources and the Forest and Wildlife Research Center.

Each plays a unique and important role in continuing the tradition of Mississippi State's service to the people of the state, region, nation, and increasingly, the world.

### The Mississippi State University Extension Service



Jim Lytle

"The MSU Extension Service makes effective use of federal, state and local resources to provide programs and activities that all citizens of Mississippi can use to improve their businesses, their communities and their lives."

JOE MCGILBERRY  
MSU Executive Director of Outreach  
and Extension Service

Often described as Mississippi State University's "classroom in the field," Extension has offices and educators located in all of the state's 82 counties.

The MSU Extension Service is a leading provider of non-credit educational opportunities for adults. Originally established in 1914 to help rural residents improve their farming operations and quality of home life, today Extension offers programs for everyone: agricultural and horticultural producers, food processing and food service workers, business owners, forest landowners and managers, wood products industries, elected officials, community leaders, families, parents, children and youth.

Extension programs help working Mississippians excel in their occupations. These programs include training in safe food handling, proper pesticide application, farm and forest management, assistance for entrepreneurs in business start-up, and educational support for existing business enterprises.

Many people have their first encounter with the Extension service through 4-H. The 4-H program helps young people develop the life skills, work ethic and work readiness skills essential to a successful future for themselves and for Mississippi. Young people ages 8 through 18 are not the only

ones who benefit from leadership and character-building opportunities found in 4-H. Adult volunteers and 4-H'ers pour themselves into their communities to improve individuals, families and their world.

New industry is bringing increased economic opportunities to Mississippi, but the state remains primarily rural and Extension continues to provide programs that address environmental and agricultural issues, as well as the social and health issues unique to rural communities.

Technology is rapidly changing the way Mississippians live, work and play. Advances in technology also are allowing Extension personnel to reach out in innovative ways to meet the needs of their communities quickly and efficiently. Digital imaging, distance learning, video conferencing, satellite technology, and the Internet have opened new educational doors in both rural and urban areas of the state.

Whether with programs addressing youth development, economic growth or individual life-long learning, MSU's Extension Service is working to help all Mississippians make their communities the best places for their families to live, work and play.



Marco Niconich



Bob Rutliff

“MAFES scientists work on real problems facing Mississippi and often have the pleasure of seeing the fruits of their labors put to work in the state.”

VANCE WATSON  
 Director, Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station

Providing research support for agricultural and other enterprises has been the mission of the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station since it was established in 1888.

Today, at 18 sites throughout the state, MAFES scientists carry out their mission of using science-based research to benefit agribusiness in Mississippi and to address associated social and environmental issues.

Experiment Station scientists work on the Mississippi State University campus in Starkville and at Mississippi’s four research and extension centers: the Hiram Palmertree North Mississippi Research and Extension Center in Verona, the Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville, the Central Mississippi Research and Extension Center in Raymond, and the Coastal Research and Extension Center in Biloxi. In addition, there are branch stations, research units and other MAFES facilities in Holly Springs, Pontotoc, Prairie, Crystal Springs, Newton, Beaumont, White Sand, McNeill, Pascagoula, Gulfport and Brooksville.

Research also is conducted on the farms of cooperating producers to ensure that results can be effectively applied to the needs of farmers in all areas of the state.

MAFES scientists use the latest technology in their research to make sure technological advances can be applied to the needs of Mississippi enterprises. The basic goals of their work, however, remain based on the philosophy of meeting society’s food and fiber needs through sound science that provides good stewardship of natural resources. Those goals are to:

- Develop an agricultural production system that is highly competitive in the global economy.
- Ensure a safe and secure food and fiber system.
- Protect and enhance environmental quality and conserve natural and renewable resources.
- Increase the value added from processing Mississippi’s agricultural products and enhance food safety, quality and market efficiency.
- Enhance the socioeconomic development of rural communities, the farm family and the economy of Mississippi.
- Enhance animal and crop production systems.
- Enhance the efficiency of the aquaculture and seafood industry in Mississippi.



Tom Thompson

“The college’s strength lies in its faculty, staff and students’ desire to exceed the expectations of those they have the opportunity to serve.”

**GREGG BORING**  
Interim Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine

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The College of Veterinary Medicine was established by the Mississippi Legislature in 1974. The first class was admitted in 1977 and graduated in 1981. The college has graduated more than 900 veterinarians, and more than half of the veterinarians in Mississippi are alumni of MSU-CVM.

Fully accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association, the college is committed to improving both the economic and intellectual resources of Mississippi. It is Mississippi’s primary health source for livestock and companion animals. The college also provides statewide surveillance for diseases of economic importance to the agricultural community or of potential public health significance, such as avian influenza and West Nile virus.

The four-year professional curriculum provides courses leading to the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. Graduate programs offered in the college lead to masters and doctoral degrees in selected areas of specialization, including infectious diseases, toxicology, pathology, aquatic medicine, avian medicine, and production animal medicine. The college also cooperates with Hinds and Northwest Community colleges in the delivery of a two-year veterinary technology curriculum.

The college’s professional curriculum is designed with the flexibility to address the challenges faced in prepar-

ing health professionals in an era filled with medical advancements and a proliferation of information.

The Animal Health Center is the college’s teaching hospital. The center’s goal is to be the preferred regional referral resource for medical and surgical animal health needs. The faculty and staff is meeting increasing requests from veterinary practitioners and animal owners while maintaining excellence in clinical education.

The Mississippi Veterinary Research and Diagnostic Laboratory system is a comprehensive network of laboratories located in Jackson and Stoneville and on the Starkville campus. The system serves as a valued resource for the region while gaining national recognition in poultry and aquatic disease research and diagnostics. In 2003, the laboratory handled more than 78,000 requests for diagnostic assistance. Construction is under way in Jackson on a new \$18.5 million leading-edge, full-service diagnostic laboratory. Completion is expected in 2005.

The College of Veterinary Medicine’s research efforts are primarily focused on food safety, infectious diseases and population medicine. MSU-CVM researchers are working to develop vaccines and other disease management tools and strategies to reduce production losses related to animal health.



Tom Thompson