

Vice President's Letter



Toyota recently selected Mississippi as the home for the company's newest North American automotive manufacturing facility.

Availability of a skilled workforce in areas surrounding the plant's Union County site was a big factor in Toyota's choice of

Mississippi over Arkansas and Tennessee. The recruiting efforts of local and state officials also played a role, but company officials cited another important advantage in Mississippi: air quality.

The air is cleaner in north Mississippi than in the areas around other possible locations, and that was a major consideration for the international automotive manufacturer.

The Toyota experience underscores the value of Mississippi's natural resources and the importance of making informed decisions about their use. Natural resource education and research is the mission of the College of Forest Resources at Mississippi State University.

The college's three units—the Department of Forestry, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and Department of Forest Products—train students for careers in forestry, wildlife management, forest product development and other natural resource management fields.

Scientists in the college work with state, federal and private organizations on research to protect, manage and develop the state's natural resources for the benefit of all of its citizens.

Mississippians know the value of a good fishing spot, abundant hunting opportunities, a family outing to a state park or just a leisurely stroll in the fresh air. Now it appears multinational corporations also appreciate those quality-of-life factors.

The College of Forest Resources, along with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, the Mississippi State University Extension Service and the College of Veterinary Medicine, form the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine at MSU. Each unit has a distinct mission, but they are united in their dedication to serving the needs of all Mississippians.

Vance H. Watson

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