

Vice President's Letter



Any university has to be an exciting place to work, and the articles in this issue of *Landmarks* are a good indication of why MSU may be one of the most exciting.

Our researchers are doing everything from mapping the chicken genome to surveying grabblers in order to understand why they participate in a sport that involves catching fish by hand. MSU scientists are also looking at ways to use crop residue, cotton gin trash,

nuisance plants and other nonfood crop sources in order to cut the nation's dependence on petroleum.

Research faculty and graduate students are not the only ones conducting research at MSU. Undergraduates in the colleges that make up the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine are conducting research in their areas of study.

The story on page 13 marks the passing of the boll weevil as the king of cotton pests in Mississippi. For more than 100 years, Mississippi cotton growers fought the destructive weevil with every resource at their disposal in order to protect their crop. Many of those resources were developed and tested by scientists with the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, with training in their use provided by personnel with the MSU Extension Service.

The boll weevil may be packing his bags to leave the state, but MSU research scientists and Extension personnel continue to provide support in all areas of crop production, including protection against insect pests and other threats to crops.

An important part of Mississippi State's land grant mission is to make educational outreach available to all Mississippians. At the front line of that mission are the county Extension office staffs.

When anyone is advised to "call your county Extension office," these are the people who answer the phone. Each county office is home to support and professional staff who are part of the local community. Every day they receive calls and visits from individuals looking for information on topics as varied as dealing with insect pests to setting up a family budget. The resources they have available range from personal training and experience to Extension publications and referrals to highly trained program specialists.

If you need to contact your county office, check the phone book or visit our Web site, msucares.com, and click on the link to "county offices."

Melissa J. Mixon

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