

MDAC to Distribute Farmers to Families Food Boxes at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds

Press Release

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) will distribute 1,400 whole produce boxes and 1,400 gallons of milk to the public at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds in Jackson, on Friday, July 10, as part of the Farmers to Families Food Box Program.

“The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is honored to be a part of the Farmers to Families Food Box Program. The past several months have been challenging for many families, and distributing these boxes is one way that we can assist during this time of need. This program has delivered 27.5 million food boxes across the nation to families impacted by COVID-19 and is beneficial to farmers, distributors and everyday citizens,” said Agriculture and Commerce Commissioner Andy Gipson.

Merchants Food Service of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, will supply the produce boxes and milk Friday morning at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds. The public can begin arriving at 9:00 a.m. and must remain in their vehicles with the windows up. MDAC volunteers will wear masks

and gloves at all times and when instructed, the public will be allowed to open their car trunks for placement of their food box.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) created the Farmers to Families Food Box Program under the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). Through this, the USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service partners with national, regional and local suppliers, whose workforce has been significantly impacted by the closure of restaurants, hotels and other food service businesses, to purchase up to \$3 billion in fresh produce, dairy and meat products. Suppliers then package these products into family-sized boxes and transport them to food banks, community and faith-based organizations, and other non-profits serving Americans in need.

The Mississippi State Fairgrounds is located at 1207 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39202. The public must enter through Gate 1 on Jefferson Street and exit through Gate 3 on Greymont Street.

Visit <https://www.ams.usda.gov/> to learn more about the Farmers to Families Food Box Program.

Notices designed by residents to appear on state highways

Associated Press

Starting in early August, people driving on Mississippi’s interstates will see new, quirky slogans appearing on digital message signs.

The Mississippi Department of Transportation tasked residents in May with coming up with creative notices focused on safety to display on state highways. After reviewing more than 500 entries, the Department of Transportation has selected five finalists, the department announced Friday.

“MDOT received so many clever entries throughout this contest, and we are so grateful for everyone’s participation,” Melinda McGrath, the department’s executive director, said in a news release.

The winning message comes from Tommye Henderson, of Clinton, Mississippi:

ZOOM IS FOR ONLINE MEETINGS NOT HIGHWAY DRIVING

Other notable entries were Jim Miller’s from Madison: THE HOSPITALITY STATE WILL GREET SPEEDERS WITH A WELCOME TICKET

Maggie King, of Canton, wrote:

DRIVE BOOZY AND YOUR TICKET COULD BE A DOOZY

MDOT’s traffic safety messages, which are often related to current events and pop cul-

Legislature dedicates \$275M in federal COVID-19 funds to rural broadband, distance learning programs

Press Release

Rural broadband expansion and K-12 distance learning initiatives will receive almost a fourth of the Coronavirus Relief Fund, under a package appropriated by the Mississippi Legislature. Mississippi received \$1.25 billion in unallocated federal aid to soften the pandemic’s health and economic blow to the State.

“This legislation brings connectivity to the world for our children, educators, and parents and is a giant leap forward for our State’s future,” Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann said.

The “COVID-19 Connectivity Act,” Senate Bill 3046 authored by Senator Joel Carter, establishes a grant program to expand service in unserved or underserved areas. The program makes \$65 million available to Mississippi’s 26 member-owned electric cooperatives at a one-to-one match: for every dollar the co-ops spend, they will receive one federal dollar. Ten million is available for other service providers.

are caused by driver decisions, such as speeding, driving aggressively, distracted or impaired, the transportation department said.

rently do not have access to broadband, a major hindrance for teaching, learning, and telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic,” Hosemann said. “We are grateful to all of the individuals and entities who banded together to get these bills passed including Senator DeBar, Senator Carter, Senator Scott Delano, the Public Service Commission, the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi, and others.”

The remaining Coronavirus Relief Funds will be distributed as follows:

- \$129,725,000 to hospitals, clinics, non-profits, and childcare;
- \$40 million to the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency;
- \$70 million to cities and counties;
- \$20 million to the Mississippi Department of Corrections;
- \$15 million to tourism;
- \$100 million to public universities and community and junior colleges;
- \$10 million to private schools and universities;
- \$55 million to workforce training;
- \$1 million to elections;
- \$2.5 million to the judiciary; and
- \$181,775,000 to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.

Three hundred million was appropriated in mid-May for a small business grant program, and \$2,000 stipends for certain small businesses. The legislature reserved \$50 million to use at the governor’s discretion.

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