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Mississippi product available on Clinton Kroger's shelves

Special to The Clinton Courier

Clinton's Kroger recently began stocking products from Mississippi's own Inaka Tea Company, the first of its kind in North America. Known as mugicha in Japan, boricha in Korea, and damaicha in China, barley tea has been used for centuries to bring people together, often at the end of a long day's work. It is made by gently simmering barley that has been roasted until the grains take on a rich, nutty flavor.

"As natives of Mississippi, it is important for my wife, Stevie, and I to start Inaka Tea Company in our home state," said founder and creator Chat Phillips. "I grew up in the Mississippi Delta, Stevie on the Gulf Coast, and we now call Jackson home. Inaka is built upon the values of hospitality and hard work that are embedded in our Mississippi roots."

"We're based right here in the metro," said Stevie. "Starting a company amidst a pandemic, particularly with no existing supply chain, was... challenging, BUT we officially hit shelves at the Clinton Kroger this week!"

Chat Phillips was born and raised in Yazoo County, Mississippi, on a catfish farm. From there, he went to high school and college out of state, which eventually led him to study abroad in Japan, where he picked up Japanese and has his first sip of barley tea. After college, he moved back to Mississippi and started his career in economic development, spending time in Tupelo and Jackson, then was recruited to



Special to The Clinton Courier

Pinelake Church recently donated \$200,000 to establish an endowment fund at Jackson State University in honor of John and Vera Mae Perkins.

do site selection consulting, representing international clients in locating manufacturing facilities in the U.S.

After roasting his own grains and brewing tea at home for many years, Chet decided to bring roasted grain teas to the U.S. In 2019, he quit his consulting job to launch Inaka Tea Company.

"Inaka started as a simple sip on a hot day in the countryside of Japan and was born to share the delicious tradition of roasted grain teas with everyone. All our teas are brewed and bottled at peak freshness using only real ingredients and no artificial flavors, so they can be enjoyed by anyone, anytime!"

For more information, visit www.inakatea.com.

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