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## **MISSISSIPPI MARKET EXPECTED TO DRAW THOUSANDS OF RETAILERS THIS YEAR**

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) will host the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Mississippi Market Wholesale Show June 14-15, 2002. The event is open to retail merchants from Mississippi and surrounding states, and will showcase the products and services of Mississippi Manufacturers, wholesalers, service providers and artisans.

All Mississippi-based companies with products for re-sale in stores can exhibit in Mississippi Market, as well as companies with products or services to be used by exhibitors or retailers. According to Jenny Wilkinson, who serves as director for the event, "The quality of the products shown at the Market, as well as the variety, is outstanding. Since 1996, the show has tripled in size, going from 55 vendors to an expected 160 this year."

Thousands of retailers from Mississippi and surrounding states have received invitations to attend the 2002 Mississippi Market. There is no charge to attend, and retailers can place orders on-site for merchandise. The show is closed to the public, so retailers will be required to provide credentials. Over 1000 buyers are expected to attend the show.

Many new vendors will be showing their merchandise this year. This eclectic collection of new vendors include: Blueswood Art's furniture made from old Mississippi barn wood; Buchanan Art Studio's hand-painted floor cloths, screens and watercolor paintings; Fireside Woodworks' hand crafted, hand painted children's furniture and household accessories; Loopteloo's whimsical wire art accessories; and Kirkpatrick Wildlife Photography's limited edition prints and beautiful coffee table books.

Live ornamental plants are also new to the Mississippi Market. Shows Plant Farm, Red Oak Nursery, Serenity Hill Nursery, Spring Creek Nursery and Rocky Creek Nurseries will be selling their plants to garden centers, florists and other plant retailers.

"I am very pleased with the direction of the show, and that Mississippi retailers can buy products at a local show," added Wilkinson. "The retailers are extremely pleased with the Mississippi Market."

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-page 2-

An exhibitor package is available for \$325. A limited number of booths are available, so manufacturers, artisans, wholesalers, and service providers interested in exhibiting need to register now. Buyer pre-registration has been extended to Friday, May 31, 2002. After that date, buyers can still register on-site. Retailers and suppliers interested in participating should call 1-888-886-3323 or visit [www.mississippimarket.org](http://www.mississippimarket.org).

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