

President's Banquet – Mississippi Cattleman's Association  
Saturday, February 10, 2001  
6:00 p.m.  
Clarion Hotel – Ballroom

(Message: 15 minutes on Agriculture opportunities in MS)

## **Opening**

- Good Evening
- Story (re: Sister & Brother-in-law being farmers OR about growing up in Batesville, where farming is very important and common.)

## **Main Points**

1. Agriculture
  - a. Is Mississippi's #1 industry
  - b. Employing approximately 30% of our state's workforce, either directly or indirectly.
  - c. A \$4.7 billion industry
    - i. Having a \$16 billion impact
  - d. Agriculture makes a significant contribution to ALL 82 counties.
  - e. The farming industry has shaped MS
    - i. It is our state's backbone
    - ii. We cannot survive without it
  - f. We must look for new, innovative ways to expand this industry

## 2. The Internet

- a. Our world and marketplace are more easily accessible today
  - i. Because of the “explosion” of the Internet
  - ii. 50 websites in 1994, now over 50 million.
- b. We live in a global economy
- c. We must be more competitive in the marketplace
  - i. The Internet is a key to that success
- d. The Internet can enhance our state’s opportunities around the globe
- e. It can showcase our products to the World
- f. We can sell agriculture products and commodities on the Internet
  - i. Adding value to your efforts

## 3. Advantage Mississippi Initiative (AMI)

- a. World Trade Center Status
  - i. MS’s attractive geographic location in “the Center of the Americas”
    - 1. A strategic position to expand our role for international trade
  - ii. We can better penetrate the growing world market
  - iii. Enhances existing trade programs

- iv. Sends a strong signal to national and international prospects that MS has ready capabilities to meet their global market needs
- b. The AMI encourages and supports entrepreneurship among small business
  - i. It was designed to work for everyone in every county of Mississippi
  - ii. Many farmers and farms fall into this category
- c. The impact of Agriculture in MS cannot be understated
- d. We must work to ensure that farmers/agribusiness leaders and researchers work together to shape the future of agriculture in our state
- e. Mississippi Land, Water and Timber Resources Board
  - i. Works to assist the agriculture industry in the development, marketing and distribution of agricultural products
  - ii. Works to promote the rural quality of life in MS through such programs as 4-H, Future Farmers of America and agricultural education.

## **Closing**

- Working together, we can make MS an even better place to live and raise a family
- We have many opportunities available to us, we have to make them happen
- Great things are happening in our state and for our people
- We must continue our success
- America's State of Promise