each year just to participate in the Wesson Wagon Train.

"We have people from as far away as the Mississippi Gulf Coast and Louisiana riding with us," he said. "This year, we had men, women and children, ages six months to 80 years old."

Hutson says he'd like to thank everyone who participated in the Wesson Wagon Train this year for the excellent job they did.

“I’m proud of their efforts to make us look good,” he said.

The Wesson Wagon Train is comprised of authentic wagons as well as campers, some horse trailers rigged up with living quarters and some participants with tents.

For more information

If you are interested in participating in the Wesson Wagon Train or the Cedar Creek Trail Ride, contact Randy Hutson at 601-695-1299 or 601-643-2910.

Developing natural resource enterprises on the farm

ONE MISSISSIPPI LANDOWNER has added value to his Montgomery County farmland by using it for a natural resource-based enterprise that provides him with an income almost year-round.

Wade Henson, owner of Cypress Lodge Outfitters near Kilcarnel, offers white-tailed deer, turkey and waterfowl hunts as well as facilities for church gatherings and family reunions to Mississippians and visitors from around the country and the world.

Offering only a few hunts on a shoestring budget at first, Henson now stays booked most of the year. Wade is just one example of how natural resource businesses can be integrated into existing farm and timber operations to diversify income.

Natural resource enterprises

As farmers seek ways to increase their revenue, an inventory of the natural resources on their land may provide them with some options. Enterprises based on natural resources can complement current land use activities and provide additional income.

Demand for outdoor recreational opportunities in Mississippi is growing. In 2001, anglers and hunters spent $571 million in Mississippi on equipment and trip-related items (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Survey).

Non-consumptive activities also draw large numbers of participants in Mississippi. Wildlife watchers spent $505 million in the state in 2001 (USFWS Survey).

By diversifying the activities on the farm that provide income, farmers can lessen the effects of market fluctuations and natural disasters and produce dependable, annual income.

A variety of enterprises can be developed from Mississippi's abundant natural resources. Some examples include agritourism, fee hunting and fishing, wildlife watching, trail riding, heritage tourism, corn mazes, collection of pine straw for mulch and other similar activities.

The Natural Resource Enterprises (NRE) Program at Mississippi State University provides resources and training for private landowners interested in developing an enterprise based on a natural resource.

Workshops

How to develop the natural resources on private lands into an income source is the topic of a series of workshops developed by the NRE Program at Mississippi State University.

The first three workshops of this series were held in Panola and Montgomery counties in Mississippi and Chicot County, Arkansas. These workshops attracted over 190 individuals from several states (Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas) and 30 Mississippi counties.

At each workshop, resource professionals gave presentations on several subjects related to developing an enterprise. Topics such as liability considerations, cost-share programs, marketing and developing a business plan were covered.

In the afternoon sessions, workshop attendees were able to tour habitat management practices in the field. Wildlife biologists accompanied these tours and provided additional information and responded to questions.

Future workshops are planned for Sharkey, Rankin, Walthall and Simpson counties in Mississippi. Through collaboration with partners in Arkansas and Alabama, a series of workshops will be conducted in Arkansas and one workshop will be offered in west Alabama during 2006-2007.

For more information on these workshops, visit www.wildlifeworkshops.msstate.edu.

Demonstration areas

Hands-on learning opportunities for landowners are available at demonstration areas scattered throughout the state. Pond construction and management techniques are displayed at the Demonstration Pond in Starkville.

Visitors take a self-guided tour of learning stations in the impoundment. Interested landowners can view wildlife food plot plantings at Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES) farms, located throughout the state, through a
development of alternative fuels,” he said. “I am happy to see our company moving forward by offering biodiesel in north central Mississippi.”

In attendance was another prominent member of the board, Clarksdale attorney Bill Luckett.

“It’s good to see our company is working hard to continue our development in Mississippi and elsewhere. I hope every trucker running on I-55 pulls in and tries our product.”

Biodiesel is made from oilseed crops such as soybean and canola. Biodiesel can also be produced from animal fats and recycled cooking greases.

Little or no modifications to conventional engines are needed to utilize these fuels. Conventional diesel blended with biodiesel has increased lubricity.

Biodiesel also decreases the emission of unburned hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and particulate matter. In addition, biodiesel replaces the exhaust odor of petroleum diesel with the smell of popcorn or French fries when used as a pure fuel.

Biofuels, such as biodiesel, provide a great opportunity to: (1) reduce the United States’ dependence on foreign oil; (2) reduce the amount of pollution emitted into the atmosphere; and (3) revitalize farm and rural economies.

Developing natural (p. 19)

partnership with Pennington Seed Inc.

The Natural Resources Conservation Education Center in West Point will soon provide wildlife habitat management demonstrations for the public to examine. Demonstrations of moist-soil management, a birding trail, landscaping with native plants and other wildlife and fisheries management and enterprise activities will soon be developed.

The Natural Resource Enterprises Demonstration Area in Newton will contain a natural trail, backyard habitat, wildlife food plots and demonstrations of enterprises integrated with agriculture and forestry.

Learn more about these demonstration areas by visiting our Web site: www.naturalresources.msstate.edu or by calling (662) 325-3174.

Web site

The NRE Web site: (www.naturalresources.msstate.edu) contains information about habitat management and business.

May/June

The correct answer for the May/June “Solve the Mystery” is Tuliertown. A special thanks to Carolyn Dillon and the Tuliertown Times for allowing us to use the Walthall County Dairy Festival photos.

Group collects (p. 21)

berry, melon and fruit tree growers to salvage whatever they can from their fields and orchards during this growing season.

If you would like to help, contact the Mississippi office of the Society of St. Andrew at P. O. Box 257, Mathiston MS 39752 or phone 662-263-8648 or email sosams@endhunger.org.

Or visit the national Web site at: www.endhunger.org.

Understanding (p. 22)

and are acceptable practices under WTO rules. Domestic policies considered to be in the Green Box are: research, extension, inspection, grading, environmental and conservation programs, disaster relief, crop insurance and domestic food assistance.

One of the roles of WTO is to handle disputes, such as the Brazil Cotton Case, between member countries. Although WTO cannot force countries to change their policies on trade, the body can allow countries to collect import duties on violators’ exports.

The future of the farm bill

News articles and information on factors influencing the debate of the farm bill are released daily.

As the WTO “rounds” unfold and the political environment evolves, if you would like to receive national news and updates from the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Public Policy Department, please log onto www.mfsb.com and sign up for Ag News By Email. After selecting Ag News By Email, select Public Policy from the drop-down menu.

If you would like to receive mail updates, please contact the department at 601-977-4020.

Form allows (p. 23)

Chairman Goodlatte.

The committee is conducting field hearings throughout the country to gather feedback from producers and review current farm policy in preparation for reau-

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