



## News Release

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For Immediate Release/ PICTURE ATTACHED

Contact Information:

Anna Kendall Thames, Director of Education and Outreach

Office 601-354-4936

Email [athames@msforestry.net](mailto:athames@msforestry.net)

Pictured: Lynda & Joe Huggins

### **Joseph Huggins named Mississippi Forestry Association's Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year**

Jackson, Miss. - Mississippi Forestry Association (MFA) named Joe Huggins of Oxford, as the 2017 MFA Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. MFA presented the award at its annual President's Banquet, a highlight of the 2017 MFA Annual Meeting in Biloxi. The 300 banquet guests enjoyed a video presentation by Mississippi State University's *Farmweek* on Huggins' Tree Farm, Goose Valley Ranch. Huggins will represent Mississippi in the 2018 National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year competition sponsored by the American Tree Farm System.

Goose Valley Ranch was purchased in 1990 and has been under a written forest management plan since its inception. The property became a certified Tree Farm in 2003. 90% of the work done on the property is performed by the landowner himself. Huggins' family is also actively involved in helping him with the management of Goose Valley Ranch.

Garron Hicks, Mississippi Forestry Commission nominated Joe Huggins for this award. Huggins often uses his property for educational tours to benefit other landowners. Hicks states, "Mr. Huggins take pride in his Tree Farm and hopes it can be used to show others that, with a little hard work and determination, anyone can be a great Tree Farmer."

Huggins is a member of the Mississippi Forestry Association and a corporate member of the Lafayette County Forestry Association (CFA). He is also a previous recipient of the Lafayette County Soil and Water Conservation Stewardship Award and the Lafayette CFA Tree Farmer of the Year Award.

Mississippi Forestry Association's vision is to serve as the "Voice of Forestry" in Mississippi. MFA's mission is leading diverse groups to promote landowner rights, environmental stewardship, member prosperity, and community understanding. MFA members and staff work to accomplish the mission by conducting public affairs, communication, and education programs that will foster better understanding and appreciation of conservation, development, and use of forestland and resources. To learn more, visit [www.msforestry.net](http://www.msforestry.net).

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