

from the
DIRECTOR



Have you ever read a job announcement that calls for the successful candidate to be a good listener? Most don't, but listening is an important and valuable skill, especially for individuals who make decisions that can impact the livelihoods of thousands of individuals.

Each year, several hundred producers gather in Verona and Raymond to provide input on the research activities and Extension programs they need to support their agricultural enterprises. The individuals who belong to the producer advisory committees provide a valuable service to MAFES and Extension personnel by giving them opportunities to listen. A report on the 2004 producer advisory committee meetings begins on page 14.

Commodity groups also help Mississippi State focus its agricultural research and outreach programs on the needs of producers. One example is the Grower Advisory Committee of the Mississippi Poultry Association, and the article beginning on page 19 of this issue of Highlights details some of the ways the grower group is helping university personnel make their activities more in-tune with industry needs.

Mississippians are engaged in dozens of agricultural enterprises, ranging from the traditional row crops to activities that are relatively new to the state, such as cut-flower production. Advances in technology and changing market factors affect all of these businesses, making listening to the needs of the individuals involved an important part of our jobs.

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