News & Announcements

New Mississippi Law
Recognizes and Licenses
Soil Classifying Work

Mississippi Governor Cliff Finch signed into law the newly passed Senate Bill 2472 on March 3, 1979. This law recognizes and licenses soil classifying work in the state.

A new Division of Plant Industry was established within the existing Department of Agriculture and Commerce. The new law abolishes the old State Plant Board and transfers its duties to the commissioner of agriculture and commerce.

An advisory board was created to meet with and advise the commissioner of agriculture and consists of the following members: (1) the state chemist, (2) the head of the Entomology Department, Mississippi State University (MSU), (3) the head of the Plant Pathology Department, MSU, (4) the head of the Agronomy Department, MSU, (5) the state soil survey leader, MSU and (6) a soil and water conservation district commissioner appointed by the commissioner of agriculture. It meets four times each year.

The law takes effect on July 1, 1979, and was strongly supported by the Professional Soil Classifiers Association of Mississippi. Dr. H. B. Vanderford and Dr. D. E. Pettry of Starkville, and R. C. Carter, former SCS State Soil Scientist of Jackson took the leadership in getting support for the bill.

The organization worked for several years to get the law passed. In the Senate and the House of Representatives, all votes cast were "aye". Officials credit several factors which led to the successful passage. These include:

1) Support of several large organizations, including the Delta Council, the Mississippi Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Officials, the Farm Bureau, the State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, the East Mississippi Council and several others, by resolutions at their annual meetings.

2) Following very closely the advice of B. F. Smith, the executive vice-president of the Delta Council.

3) Members of the association getting the facts to individual legislators at the "grass-roots" level. It was learned that many legislators