2008 Mr. Yam

Yambilee Festival announces 2008 Mr. Yam

Mark Fields is the son of John Paul and Nan Fields and was born and raised on the family sweet potato farm in Gibsland, LA in Bienville Parish. Mark is a 1975 graduate of Cedar Creek High School in Ruston, LA. He attended Hinds Community College in Raymond, Mississippi where he graduated with an Associate Degree in General Agriculture. In 1979 he concluded his education with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture Business from Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, LA. Upon graduation, Fields returned to the family farm as a business partner with his father, mother and brother in their commercial operation as growers, packers, and shippers of fresh market sweet potatoes and certified seed. In 1995, he joined Southern Produce Distributors, Inc. of Faison, North Carolina as General Manager of Operations. This position covered a wide variety of vegetable production such as cucumbers, bell peppers, eggplant, squash, sweet corn, sweet potatoes, as well as tobacco and cotton. In 2000, Fields joined Allen Canning Company as the Raw Product Buyer for the plant in Hessmer, LA. The Fields family has a long history with the Louisiana Yambilee. His father, John Paul Fields, was the Louisiana Yambilee King in 1963, and his brother, David Fields was Mr. Yam in 1982. “It is a tremendous honor for my family and I to be recognized by the Festival Board. We have come to know so many wonderful people from across the country because of our involvement with the great folks of the Louisiana Sweet Potato Industry,” said Fields. Today, he serves as Assistant Plant Manager of the Hessmer plant for Allen Canning Company as well as President of the United Sweet Potato Council, President of the Louisiana Sweet Potato Association, Chairman of the Louisiana Sweet Potato Commission, Vice President of the Avoyelles Parish Sweet Potato Association and Board of Trustees of the Louisiana 4-H Foundation. Mr. Fields currently resides in Marksville along with his wife, Ann. His daughter and son-in-law, Rachel and Josh Rivet, reside in Baton Rouge, and his son, Matthew Fields, resides in Shreveport. The 63rd Annual Louisiana Yambilee Festival will take place October 23 – 26, 2008 at Evangeline Downs Racetrack and Casino.