



Tennessee Department of Agriculture  
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Charlie Hatcher, D.V.M.  
Commissioner

Bill Lee  
Governor

January 29, 2021

The Honorable Bill Lee  
Governor of Tennessee  
Tennessee State Capitol  
600 Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Blvd., 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the newly formed Tennessee Equine Health Commission, I am pleased to submit the Commission's first report on the equine industry. We have had multiple working groups as well as full board participation over the past month to align our goals and strategies.

The newly appointed Tennessee Equine Health Commission members have concentrated on two priority focus points:

- 1) Promoting the Health of Horses in Tennessee:
  - A. Understanding the impact of the unwanted horse and focusing our efforts to increase owner education and helping to establish preventive health guidelines.
  - B. Understanding the impact of transmissible disease and supporting the role of regulatory officials in its control.
  - C. Providing funding for research into health issues that affect the horse.
- 2) Promoting the Equine Industry in Tennessee:
  - A. Increase state funding for horse owners and producers to improve equine welfare as well as promote the equine industry.
  - B. Advocate for a centralized association for horse owners as well as all breeds and disciplines in our state.
  - C. Advocate for a state livestock complex where horse shows could take place as well as an equine educational center (state horse museum). As a priority the equine commission would recommend that the State of Tennessee fund a proper Equine Industry impact study showing present impact and future impact through a focused strategy of enhancement and promotion.

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Equine industry national data from 2017 may be viewed at [The Horse Industry by the Numbers](#). This information is helpful; however, it does not fully define our state equine significance. This impact information is key to helping our state leadership understand how the equine industry can enhance our agriculture industry and the lives of Tennesseans.

Commission members consider these outlined priorities and strategies to be an excellent starting point in our work. We have defined the needs which will help in determining how to achieve these goals as requested.

With High Regard,



Monty McInturff, D.V.M., Chair

Matt Smith, Secretary

Steve Adair III, D.V.M.

Samantha Beaty, D.V.M., State Veterinarian

Kelly Burchett

Matt Horseman

Melanie Taylor

David Terrell

cc: Commissioner of Agriculture Charlie Hatcher, D.V.M.  
Senator Steve Southerland, Chair, Energy, Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Representative Curtis Halford, Chair, Agriculture and Natural Resources