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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ohio Equine Task Force Provides Recommendations to Strengthen Industry

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (June 8, 2009) – The Ohio Equine Task Force recently submitted recommendations that were created with the intention of strengthening and promoting Ohio’s equine industry.

Created by Ohio Agriculture Director Robert Boggs in response to the critical state of Ohio’s equine industry, the task force, composed of 13 members who represent all facets of the industry, held its first meeting in November 2008. The group is chaired by State Veterinarian Tony Forshey and continues to meet to discuss ideas and strategy implementation options focused on improving and enhancing Ohio’s horse industry.

“This industry is facing many challenges, but the recommendations set forth by the task force address these obstacles and offer viable solutions,” said Boggs. “This will need to be a joint effort among state government, legislators, and the equine industry, but I am hopeful that we can begin the process of rebuilding this crucial industry and increase community interest and awareness.”

Ohio’s equine industry contributes a total economic impact valued at approximately \$2.2 billion in goods and services and is made up of more than 307,000 horses. More than 16,000 Ohioans are employed by this sector.

Recommendations made by the task force include:

Use the Ohio Equine Industry Coalition as a unified voice for the equine industry in Ohio.

Work to define concepts and potential funding sources for an equine marketing program. The funds generated from this program should be used to expand the general public’s knowledge of Ohio’s equine industry and motivate greater participation in the variety of equine activities throughout the state.

Examine the necessity for infrastructure projects and support the industry in efforts to get such projects developed. These projects will include, but are not limited to, the expansion of facilities for the Quarter Horse Congress and the building of a show facility in Northeast Ohio.

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Note: For a complete list of the recommendations, please contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s Office of Communication at 614-752-9817.

