

Horse Industry Promotion Referendum

Media Contact: Liz Lahti, Extension Agent, Livestock
910-321-6862 or liz_lahti@ncscu.edu

Date: Feb. 16, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The owners and lessors of horses will vote across the state on March 8 to determine whether to continue to voluntarily assess themselves \$4 per ton of commercial horse feed in order to provide funds to promote the interests of the horse industry.

The vote will take place in the Cumberland County Cooperative Extension Center from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. North Carolina residents who have been nine years or older as of Jan. 1, 2017, and who has complete or partial ownership or lease of an equine (horse, pony, mule, donkey or hinny) is eligible to vote. Individuals must sign a statement certifying eligibility at time of voting.

Since many horse owners work away from home during business hours, a provision has been made for absentee voting. Horse owners may visit or call Cooperative Extension between Feb. 20 and March 8 to request a ballot and absentee registration form. The forms must be turned in to the Extension office by March 8, and will be counted along with others on March 9.

If the vote is favorable, the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will continue to receive the assessment funds from manufacturers and/or distributors of horse feed, and will remit the money to the NC Horse Council. The Horse Council has indicated that the funds will be used for 4-H and other youth and educational programs, trail advocacy, equine research, representation of horse interests in government, marketing programs, enforcement of horse laws, and improved public awareness of diseases and other threats to the wellbeing of horses.

Many other agricultural commodities have similar voluntary assessment programs. Horsemen may receive a refund of the assessment by writing to the NC Horse Council within a year of purchase and including proof of purchase.

For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact Lisa Childers at 910.321.6880, no later than five business days before the event.

