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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New York Sire Stakes Announces Breeders Awards for 2020 & 2021

Awards anticipated to recover coming out of pandemic

SCHENECTADY, N.Y. – The Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund Board of Trustees has approved Breeders Awards for performances in 2020 and set a budget for the 2021 season. Awards in the amount of \$500,000 will be distributed based on 2020 earnings and are set at \$750,000 for this racing year.

The Breeders Awards program provides rewards for each level of NYSS racing: Sire Stakes, Excelsior Series and County Fairs. The awards are residency-based, rewarding breeders who keep their mares in New York State for at least 180 days surrounding conception, thereby contributing to the agricultural economy. The program is designed to stimulate New York state's agriculture sector and support New York farms.

"It is imperative to recognize the breeders who support the New York Sire Stakes program as they are the foundation of our agricultural benefits to the state," said M. Kelly Young, executive director, Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund. "The Fund was not able to announce 2020 awards previously as we waited to see the recovery of our racing-related revenue sources. Our receipts last year were down more than 60% of pre-pandemic times. It is encouraging that recovery has continued in a very positive direction this year as the entire state moves forward.

"We greatly appreciate the patience of breeders as we worked to provide the strongest possible awards in light of the challenging times we have been through. We will review receipts later in the year and are hopeful that we will be able to return to previous Breeders Award levels in future years."

Payments for 2020 are being calculated and will be mailed to recipients shortly. Breeders expecting awards should review the Mare Residency lists for the 2016 and 2017 breeding seasons at: <http://www.nysirestakes.com/breeding/resident-mares.shtml> . If a breeder believes they returned paperwork for those breeding seasons and does not see their mare listed, contact the Fund office before May 28 so any inadvertent omissions may be corrected. Checks will be mailed after that and cannot be amended as all funds will be distributed.

Payments for the 2021 season are expected to be mailed in late October or early November to resume a normal schedule of Breeders Award payments.

Questions about the Breeders Awards or Mare Residency program should be directed to the Fund office at 518-388-0178 or email info@nysirestakes.com. Forms and residency guidelines can be found at www.nysirestakes.com.

About the Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund:

The Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund (the Fund) is a public benefit corporation established in 1965 by the Laverne Law (Laws of New York, Chapter 567 of the Laws of 1965). The mission of the Fund is to promote agriculture through the breeding of Standardbred horses and the conduct of equine research within the State. To carry out its legislative mission, the Fund administers the New York Sire Stakes races, Excelsior/State Fair Series races, and County Fair Races. Additionally, the Fund provides assistance to county agriculture societies and contributes to the statewide 4-H program and to the Harry M. Zweig Fund for Equine Research.

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