



Agriculture and NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund Announces Increase in Breeder's Awards for New York Sire Stakes Races

SCHENECTADY, N.Y. – The Agriculture and NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund (FUND) is pleased to announce an increase to breeder's awards given through the New York Sire Stakes program. This season, the FUND approved an additional \$100,000 from handles at harness tracks across New York. The FUND's Board of Directors has made the decision to direct this funding to breeders of 2-year-old New York resident Standardbreds. These breeders invest in the New York Sire Stakes program at the highest level by raising and keeping their mares in New York State. This increase brings the total award payout to two-year-old and three-year-old breeders in 2017 to an estimated \$1.1 million.

The Breeders Awards program provides rewards for each level of NYSS racing: Sire Stakes, Excelsior Series and County Fairs, and are split into two categories, Resident and Non-Resident. The Non-Resident Based Awards reward breeders whose horses perform well at all levels of the New York Sire Stakes Racing program. The Residency Bonus Awards reward breeders who keep their mares in New York State, thereby contributing to the New York State economy and agricultural markets.

"There are so many who play a part in the ongoing prosperity of harness racing in New York, but the role of breeders cannot be diminished. Without them, this sport could not flourish," said Michael Kimelman, Board Trustee, Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund. "With this additional funding going to the breeders who support the program at the highest level by keeping their horses in New York, we're recognizing the impact they continue to have on the industry."

The New York Sire Stakes was the first program of its kind developed in North America, featuring 2- and 3-year-old New York-bred standardbreds. The first stakes races were held in 1961. The program has since become a model for state-bred racing programs. With the passage of the Laverne Law in 1964, the FUND began receiving a percentage of the industry's betting handle to manage the Sire Stakes program.

The New York Sire Stakes season runs through October with the Finals for both trotters and pacers to be held at Yonkers Raceway on October 14. The County Fair Series races are held concurrent with the season with the finals in Saratoga on September 15. For a complete racing schedules, visit 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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