



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

# **MEDIA ADVISORY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 17, 2023**

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**Who: Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson**

**What: Heart of the Horse Trainers Challenge & Expo**

**When: Friday, May 19, and Saturday, May 20, 2023**

**Where: Mississippi State Fairgrounds, Kirk Fordice Equine Center  
1207 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39202**

## **Mississippi Fairgrounds to Host Heart of the Horse Trainers Challenge & Expo**

**STATE FAIRGROUNDS, Miss.** – The Mississippi State Fairgrounds will host the Heart of the Horse Trainers Challenge and Expo, presented by Mississippi Horse Rescue, on Friday, May 19, beginning at 8:00 a.m. and Saturday, May 20, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the Kirk Fordice Equine Center. Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson, a longtime supporter of Mississippi’s equine industry, will be in attendance and available for interviews on Friday, May 19, at 10:00 a.m. The media is invited to attend.

“I look forward to the Heart of the Horse Trainers Challenge and Expo,” said Commissioner Gipson. “This is a great event that brings in competitors from around the nation to showcase English, western and gaited disciplines of horsemanship. I encourage the public to attend, even those who may not be familiar with the equine industry, and learn something new about these elegant and practical animals. This event is free to the public and provides the perfect family outing for a unique show and good cause.”

The two-day event will feature the Trainers Challenge and Safe Horse Auction, as well as an expo of equine related vendors and exhibitors. This year’s Trainers Challenge includes 23 horse trainers from five states who previously selected an untrained rescue horse back in January of 2023. These professional, amateur and youth trainers were given 120 days to prepare their rescue horses for this competition designed to test their horsemanship skills. The Trainers Challenge kicks off Friday morning at 8:00 a.m. as participants compete for over \$15,000 in cash and prizes.

In addition, the Safe Horse Auction will be held on Saturday, May 20, at 4:00 p.m. This live auction will present 18 of the ‘challenge horses,’ who have been pre-vetted and trained intensively for 120 days, to pre-screened adopters. Prospective bidders must be pre-approved to adopt through Mississippi Horse Rescue and meet with the horse and trainer prior to the auction.

To find more information on the Heart of the Horse Trainers Challenge and Expo, and how to qualify to adopt a ‘challenge horse,’ visit [link](#). For questions, contact Lori Carter at (228) 383-1002.

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**Media Note: Commissioner Andy Gipson will address the media and answer questions on Friday, May 19, at 10:00 a.m.**