



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

ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

# **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Ag Theft Investigation Leads to Recovery of Stolen Tractor and Disk in Clarke County**

**JACKSON, Miss.** – The Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB), the lead agency in a stolen tractor theft investigation, made an arrest and recovered a stolen Kubota tractor and Tuflin disk in Clarke County. The investigation was led by MALTB investigator Jamie Taylor with assistance from investigators Jim Stone, Leon Wedgeworth and Leonard Bentz.

“I commend Director Dean Barnard, MALTB investigators and the Clarke County Sheriff’s Office for their efforts in solving this case, and I am glad all the equipment was recovered and returned to the rightful owners,” said Mississippi Agriculture and Commerce Commissioner Andy Gipson. “For our farmers and ranchers throughout the state, their livestock, crops and equipment are their livelihood; and we aim to protect and serve our agricultural community.”

On August 3, 2020, MALTB investigators issued a search warrant at a residence in Clarke County, which led to the recovery of a stolen 2014 Cab and Air, 4x4, Kubota tractor with a front end loader along with a six foot Tuflin disk that were previously reported stolen in Greene County on July 18, 2020. The value of the stolen property was \$45,000.

During the course of the investigation, agents with MALTB, Clarke County Sheriff Todd Kemp and sheriff investigators arrested Delreco S. Strickland, age 43, of Clarke County. Strickland was charged with possession of stolen property. Strickland also had an outstanding warrant from the Mississippi Department of Corrections; the investigation is ongoing.

MALTB Director, Dean Barnard, praised MALTB investigators and Clarke County Sheriff Kemp and his department for their dedication to this case. “There has been an increase in tractor, trailer and utility vehicle thefts in the past three months. I advise people to use extra precaution in securing your property by not leaving equipment in the open, removing keys and checking your equipment daily. It’s also important to take pictures of your equipment and write down the serial numbers in the instance that you become a victim of theft,” Director Barnard.

The Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau enforces state laws pertaining to the theft of cattle, horses, swine, poultry, fish, farm equipment, chemicals, timber and all other farm or agriculture-related crimes. Visit [mdac.ms.gov/bureaus-departments/agricultural-livestock-theft-bureau/](http://mdac.ms.gov/bureaus-departments/agricultural-livestock-theft-bureau/) to learn more about the MALTB. To report or provide information regarding an agricultural crime, call (800) 678-2660.

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