



“Promoting a thriving equine community in Vermont.”

Dear Vermont Agriculture Committee Member:

As the president of the Vermont Horse Council, I am writing to reiterate our priorities for 2025 and to introduce you to the knowledgeable members of our Equine Industry Committee. These individuals are a valuable resource for you and are committed to advancing equine related legislation within Vermont.

This group is led by Heidi Krantz (equinesummit@vthorsecouncil.org). Members include Mindy Hinsdale (mhinsdale5@gmail.com), Chrissy Rohan (Christina.Rohan@uvm.edu), Mickey Perry (muddymares261@gmail.com), Karen McKnight (muddymares261@gmail.com), Sue Perna (sueperna@hotmail.com) and me (president@vthorsecouncil.org).

Those of you who were on the House Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security Committee last year may remember testimony made by Chrissy Rohan and Mindy Hinsdale concerning the equine industry in Vermont. We are specifically concerned about how the many definitions of agriculture in Vermont statutes impacts our industry.

Members of your Committee indicated strong interest in learning more about our concerns and our Equine Industry Committee has identified the following three priorities for 2025:

1. Clarify the definition of agriculture to address inconsistencies in how equine businesses are handled. We are considering equine businesses to be those earning 51% or more of their revenue from the equine operation.
2. Clarify inconsistencies within the Current Use program, especially regarding business properties housing equines.
3. Understand property tax implications on business properties housing equines.

We have been working with the Vermont Law and Graduate School, which has provided the attached research on the “definitions of agriculture” as currently found in state statutes. We appreciate the assistance of the VLGS in providing this information.

We are also continuing to collaborate with the Vermont Farm Bureau to educate members of the legislature on the many ways the equine industry benefits Vermont’s economy and landscape, as well as outlining issues impacting the equine industry throughout Vermont.

We feel it is critical to establish communication with you on our efforts and would appreciate the opportunity to be added to your schedule for a brief in person conversation with Heidi Krantz, Equine Industry Committee Chair, as you begin the new session and welcome new members.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Cole

Jeannette Cole, Vermont Horse Council President

president@vthorsecouncil.org