



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE
Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau
CINDY HYDE-SMITH, COMMISSIONER
JEFF STEWART, DIRECTOR**

PRESS RELEASE

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Cattle Theft Investigation by MS Department of Agriculture Leads to Arrests

Jackson, Miss. – Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Cindy Hyde-Smith and the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB), the law enforcement division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, announced that three individuals were recently arrested for livestock theft and grand larceny for an incident that occurred on Pinehaven Drive in Hinds County.

Lead MALTB Investigator Mike McGowan, in conjunction with the Hinds County Sheriff's Department, arrested Robert L. Grayer, Cory J. Surrell and Samuel L. Michael of Jackson, Miss., for the theft of a four wheeler and four head of cattle.

Commissioner Hyde-Smith commended Investigator McGowan for his hard work and dedication and would like to thank the Hinds County Sheriff's Department for assisting in this investigation. "I continue to urge all livestock owners to brand their livestock for identification purposes for instances such as this. By branding their livestock, farmers help provide a future deterrent against theft," Hyde-Smith added. She went on to say that the cattle in this incident were youth 4-H show cows and that she knows the hard work and dedication put into these animals is significant. "My heart goes out to this family, and I am proud that the individuals responsible for this will be prosecuted."

Jeff Stewart, director of MALTB, says livestock theft is still a problem in Mississippi. Stewart added that a brand is like a return address for livestock. Stewart would also like to encourage everyone to invest in some type of security precautions, such as game cameras or motion activated video recorders.

The Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau enforces laws to prevent the theft of livestock, timber and agricultural products and investigates all agricultural crimes. The bureau also handles the registration of all livestock brands in the state. The cost to register a brand is \$5 for a registration period of 5 years. To report or provide information regarding an agricultural crime, call (800) 678-2660.

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