



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

CINDY HYDE-SMITH
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Stolen Equipment Investigation Leads to Recovery by MS Department of Agriculture

Jackson, Miss. - The Madison County Sheriff's Department and Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB), the law enforcement division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, initiated an investigation in early March 2016 that resulted in the recovery of approximately \$270,000 of stolen equipment. The recovered items are from 10 business burglaries that began in September 2015 and continued through January 2016.

Investigators have recovered stolen equipment including two tractors, four trailers, two all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and 12 zero-turn lawn mowers in Madison County. The recovered items were reported stolen from tractor dealerships and outdoor equipment businesses located in Oxford, Kosciusko, Forest, Carthage, Louisville, Belzoni, Natchez, Columbia, Gulfport and Jackson.

As a result of the ongoing investigation, three suspects were arrested and charged with receiving stolen property and altering vehicle identification numbers. Additional arrests are expected as this investigation continues.

The MALTB would like to acknowledge Madison County Sheriff Randy Tucker and his staff for their dedicated assistance, along with the Leake and Hinds County Sheriffs' Departments in this joint investigation. The success of this investigation is attributed to the collaboration of multiple law enforcement agencies.

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. To report or provide information regarding an agricultural crime, call (800) 678-2660.

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Photo and outline attached.

About the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce

Under the leadership of Commissioner Cindy Hyde-Smith, the mission of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is to protect and promote agricultural-related businesses within the state and to promote Mississippi's products throughout both the state and the rest of the world for the benefit of all Mississippi citizens. This is accomplished through many bureaus and departments within the agency including the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum, Mississippi Farmers Market, Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau, Bureau of Plant Industry, Market Development Division and Bureau of Regulatory Services. To learn more about MDAC, visit www.mdac.ms.gov.



The Madison County Sheriff's Department and Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB) recovered approximately \$270,000 of stolen equipment including two tractors, four trailers, two all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and 12 zero-turn lawn mowers in Madison County. The recovered items were reported stolen from 10 tractor dealerships and outdoor equipment businesses located in Oxford, Kosciusko, Forest, Carthage, Louisville, Belzoni, Natchez, Columbia, Gulfport and Jackson.