



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**  
ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 13, 2019**

**Contact: Paige Manning, Director of Marketing and Public Relations**  
**(601) 359-1163 / cell: (662) 312-5897**  
[paige@mdac.ms.gov](mailto:paige@mdac.ms.gov)

### **Smith County Miniature Donkey Deaths Solved**

**JACKSON, Miss.** — The Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB), the law enforcement division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, solved the investigation into the mysterious deaths of miniature donkeys in Smith County. The investigation was led by MALTB Investigator Jamie Taylor.

The investigation began on May 20, 2019, when Taylor received a call from the Smith County Sheriff's Office stating that a miniature donkey had been killed on a farm. The owners reported that the donkey had been shot, which led to the investigation in conjunction with the Smith County Sheriff's Office.

By June 1, three additional miniature donkeys had been killed. Numerous interviews and other investigative techniques resumed until evidence was captured.

During the night of July 3, surveillance equipment recorded three dogs attacking and killing a fifth miniature donkey. Experts then determined the death of all five donkeys was not the result of a gunshot, but rather from attacks by dogs.

“While this was an unfortunate incident, I am glad to know that the case has been solved, and I commend the efforts of Investigator Taylor and the Smith County Sheriff's Office,” said Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson.

MALTB Director, Dean Barnard, praised Investigator Taylor and local law enforcement officials for their dedication to this case. “I appreciate the relentless efforts of Investigator Taylor and the assistance of the Smith County Sheriff's Office in investigating this case,” said 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. To report or provide information regarding an agricultural crime, call (800) 678-2660.

###