

Bringing news to 5,000 New Hampshire Farm Bureau families

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## Tax on Equines a Non-Starter

By Rob Johnson  
NHFBF Executive Director

Legislation to require equines "kept" in New Hampshire to be licensed was effectively dead on arrival. Representative Carla Skinder of Cornish, the bill's prime sponsor, made it known the morning of the January 27 hearing that she would ask the Local and Regulated Revenues Committee to recommend the bill ITL to the House. ITL is a motion to kill and stands for Inexpedient-to-Legislate. Skinder was responding to the public outcry in opposition to the bill. A few days earlier one of the other of the five sponsors had withdrawn his support saying he had misunderstood what the bill did.

**HB 427-FN-A-LOCAL**, relative to equine licenses, required municipalities to license equine animals. It established a \$25 yearly fee to be paid by "every owner or keeper of an equine." Equine is defined as "any member of the equine family which includes horses, mules, asses and zebra" four months of age or older. The Department of Agriculture estimates there are between 18,000 and 25,000



Julie Porter of Dover, Chair of the Farm Bureau Equine Committee testifies against HB 427 for Farm Bureau. Seated directly behind Julie are (left to right) Clifford McGinnis, DVM of Pembroke, Jim Brady of Lee and John Hutton of Lee.

horses in the state.

The fee was split three ways with \$10 retained by municipalities to be used for animal control costs, \$10 to be deposited in the state's General Fund and \$5 deposited in a newly established State Veterinarian's Fund to be used in carrying out the duties of the State Veterinarian.

Prior to a license being issued, the bill required verification from a licensed veterinarian that the equine had been vaccinated against rabies.

Despite Representative Skinder's notice that she would be asking ITL, a crowd well in excess of 150 people turned out for the hearing. Prior to

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## Telling Our Story About Agriculture

By Tiffany Briggs  
NH Young Farmer Committee member

Two years ago Dana and I embarked on an adventure. We have traveled more than 10,000 miles to meetings and trainings in 10 different states, and our national's capital, Washington DC. At these events we worked with some of Farm Bureaus' top Young Farmer and Ranchers and Advisors.

Dana and I were named to the National Young Farmer and Rancher Committee during the 2007 YF&R Leadership Conference in Jacksonville, Florida. While we were excited and

honored for this opportunity we had jobs, family, and the farm to worry about. We worried about how we would logistically manage this new responsibility. Our decision to go forward was truly a leap of faith.

Over the last few years internet blogs have been replacing newspapers; we spent many hours blogging about agriculture, our family, and the economy. Another important part of the committee is media and power point training. We spent hours going over media training in print form, radio, and television. We learned the

value and importance of communicating factually information about our farming operation with those who may have seen or heard misleading information. We as farmers need to get out and tell "our story about agriculture". We had policy development training followed by trips to the Hill to meet our congressman. We also were able to experience community involvement at our meetings, whether it was sorting food at a food pantry or reading accurate ag books to preschool age children.

Along with the hard work, we have had fun times and created memories that will last a lifetime. We have made many new friends that have the same desires we do to make a difference in agriculture.

As our journey came to an end last week, we want to thank those who made it possible, our family, friends, and New Hampshire Farm Bureau. We need to also give a special thanks to Olivia and Victoria for allowing mom and dad to be gone 70 days in the last 2 years. We know that it was tough sometimes, but we know you now understand the importance of "telling our story about agriculture".

I strongly encourage any Farm Bureau member who has the opportunity to serve on a national committee to do so. Dana and I feel blessed to have had this opportunity. THANK YOU NEW HAMPSHIRE FARM BUREAU! Don't forget to visit the YF&R Blog [www.fb](http://www.fb) or to tell your story about agriculture.



Tiffany & Dana Briggs (right) accept their AFBF Young Farmer & Rancher Committee retirement plaque from Dan Durheim, AFBF Program Development Director at the 2009 Young Farmer & Rancher Leadership Conference in Sacramento, CA.