

We are writing to you today to ask to to preserve and expand the use of public trails open to horses. Ct. is actually one of the states with a large horse population. People who own horses spend alot of money with large animal vets, hay from local farms, grain from local feed stores, tack and clothing from local establisments, trucks and trailers and fuel from local dealers.

This local money supports Ct businesses. Additionally, since substantial tracts of open space are needed to stable and provide hay for horses, their presence in Ct. supports open space, which will not only stabilize a towns tax base, but also reduce runoff during rainstorms or snowmelt. In the case of haylots, water leaving a haylot will be far superior quality for streams and aquifers than water leaving a paved over, developed area.

Finally, there is a substantial real estate market in Ct. for horse properties. These properties generate large sums of money for real estate agents, bankers, and fees for towns when these horse farms are sold to the next horse owner. These types of properties and their ancillary benefits **EXIST BECAUSE CT. HAS PUBLIC TRAILS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE HORSES.** It therefore is for the benefit of many, not just the horse owner, that existing public trails remain open to horses, and more trails be created. It will be good for the public, as well as the environment. Thank you for your consideration.

Mark Christensen

Tom Kalal

East Lyme Agribusiness co-chairs