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## **Grant to Promote Horse Shows**

*Madison County, Syracuse to jointly promote CNY for bookings*

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**SYRACUSE, NEW YORK**— The Syracuse Convention & Visitors Bureau (SCVB) has received a matching \$50,000 grant from Empire State Development, the state’s economic development agency, to promote Onondaga and Madison counties as places to hold equestrian events. The SCVB and Madison County Tourism Department will match the grant, for a total of \$100,000.

The \$50,000 grant comes from the state’s “Explore NY” program, which encourages two or more counties or tourism promotion agencies to work together to market themselves as a tourism destination.

Both the SCVB and Madison County chose to apply for the matching grant, in an effort to spread the word on Central New York’s wide variety of fantastic equestrian facilities and resources, as well as the area’s linear destination, titled the Equine Alley, which connects equestrian assets in Madison County with those of the Syracuse area in Onondaga County. The specific name of the effort between the two counties is the Equine Alley Partnership.

The combined funds, totaling \$100,000, will be used to publish materials and develop and implement initiatives that promote the Equine Alley to the sponsors of horse shows.

A plethora of horse farms along Route 20 in Madison County, combined with the continued successful operation of the Empire Expo Center has helped build CNY into a significant equestrian tourism destination. In total the State Fairgrounds plays host to over 30 various horse shows and competitions through out the year, not including the Great New York State Fair.

When the abundance of horse farms and the equestrian activities on the New York State Fairgrounds are combined with world-renowned equestrian programs at both Morrisville State College and Cazenovia College, celebrity status personalities and events, including John and Beezie Madden, an Olympic Champion based in Cazenovia, New York, and their annual Syracuse Invitational Sporthorse Tournament, and other localized activities from polo grounds, horseback riding trails and jumping stadiums; the spirit of the local equestrian community in Central New York is unveiled.

“We have many equestrian opportunities here,” said SCVB President, David Holder. “We need to take advantage of that and make sure equine communities around the world know what a great and welcoming place Central New York is for their future equine needs.”

The Equine Alley's close proximity to the Equine Hospital at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Science in Ithaca, NY, staffed around-the-clock with veterinarians, is also an extra equestrian asset.

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