



For Immediate Release

**MARS ESSEX HORSE TRIALS OFFERS TOP EQUESTRIAN COMPETITION  
& FAMILY WEEKEND IN THE COUNTRY**

**PICTURESQUE MOORLAND FARM SHOWCASES CHAMPION HORSES & RIDERS,  
CLASSIC CAR SHOW, SHOPPING & DINING, CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES  
JUNE 23-24**

FAR HILLS, NJ --- Whether you're an eventing enthusiast, just love horses, or are looking to spend an enjoyable early summer day in New Jersey's beautiful countryside, the Mars Essex Horse Trials offers all of the above in one of the most breathtaking settings in the state.

The Mars Essex Horse Trials returns with premier equestrian competition and a weekend of outdoor family-oriented events in the rolling hills of Somerset County at picturesque Moorland Farm in Far Hills, NJ, from June 23-24, 2018.

For the competitive horseperson, the Mars Essex Horse Trials features the sport of Eventing. Often referred to as an "equestrian triathlon," Eventing combines three distinct disciplines: the elegance of Dressage, the thrill of Cross-Country and the precision of Show Jumping. Long Valley resident Morgan Rowsell's beautifully designed cross-country course is set to challenge more than 200 competitors this year.

Other activities include a highly popular classic car show with more than 200 entries; The Farmstand, offering fresh food from local markets; The Essex Market, offering a wide range of shopping from saddles and riding gear to jewelry and artwork; and the Willow School children's activity center, offering a fun and creative diversion for younger spectators and their parents.

"This is an event where riders have the opportunity to compete at the highest level at a beautiful venue and where spectators can be part of the action as they view the horses up close throughout all phases of competition," said Ralph Jones, President of Essex Horse Trials, who spearheaded the event's 2017 return with Rowsell. "As we saw last year when this event returned after a 19-year absence, both horse enthusiasts and families alike loved spending the day at Moorland Farm."

Moorland Farm provides a breathtaking setting and rare opportunity to go behind the gates of this historic 230-acre property, which is only open to the public two weekends a year. It is also home of the annual Far Hills Race Meeting, a nationally prestigious steeplechase race held each October.

General Admission is just \$15 in advance and \$20 at the gate. Parking is free.

The Hoopstick Club offers a VIP experience with ringside seating adjacent to the Show Jumping arena with views of the cross-country course including the exciting and expansive water complex; lunch or brunch during the day; and a cocktail party on Saturday evening.

A staple of any great outdoor event is the ability to tailgate and the Essex Horse Trials presents two great options in 2018. New this year is Water Jump Tailgating, offering select spots around the event's signature cross-country element. Hilltop Tailgating provides panoramic views of the entire event. Attendees may bring a picnic lunch or purchase all the fixings at The Farmstand. Tailgating packages include one reserved parking space and four admission tickets.

Proceeds from the event will benefit the Greater Newark LifeCamp in nearby Pottersville, which provides an enriching day camp experience for approximately 300 Newark-area youths per day for six weeks during July and August.

For three decades, the Essex Horse Trials was a highlight on the equestrian calendar, attracting top American and international competitors as well as thousands of fans who enjoyed both the competition and the social aspects. The original trials, conceived in 1968, grew to be a qualifier for the Olympic Games and World Championships but came to a close on its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1998 when some of the USET land on which it was then held was developed.

(more)

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The event returned last year with great success, with 200 horses competing and abundant sunshine greeting fans, both old and new. Veteran champion rider Buck Davidson, along with local competitors Holly Payne Caravella (Chester), Clarissa Wilmerding (Califon) and Megan Kepferle (Long Valley), were among last year's riders. Local stables and riders will again be highlighted at this year's competition.

Mars, Inc., the original sponsor of the Essex Horse Trials, returned in 2017 and continues as the event's title sponsor. Presenting sponsors include Open Road Auto Group, Peapack-Gladstone Bank, RWJ Barnabas Health, and Running 'S' Equine Veterinary Services.

For additional information and tickets, please visit [www.essexhorsetrials.org](http://www.essexhorsetrials.org).

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### **WHO:**

Mars Essex Horse Trials & Family Country Weekend

### **WHAT:**

2 days of equestrian and family activities in New Jersey's horse country

### **WHEN:**

Saturday, June 23 --- 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 24 --- 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

### **WHERE:**

Moorland Farm

50 US 202

Far Hills, NJ 07931

### **TICKETS/INFO:**

Advance: \$15, Gate: \$20.

Children age 14 and under: Free.

VIP Hoopstick Club: \$250, includes preferred ringside seating, continental breakfast, brunch with open bar, cocktail party.

Tailgating: Water Jump \$400, Hilltop \$200; includes one reserved parking space and four admission tickets.

Tickets available at [www.essexhorsetrials.org](http://www.essexhorsetrials.org)

*Advance purchase strongly encouraged.*

INFO: [www.essexhorsetrials.org](http://www.essexhorsetrials.org) or 908-234-9115

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