

## Horse Country Protection Program

### *Visioning the Future of Marion County's Farmland*

*Update continued:*

At the October workshop, project partners **Equine Land Conservation Resource** and the **American Farmland Trust** will share the benefits of a Rural Land Management Plan and examples of successful plans from other communities.

After the public workshop, if the Commissioners decide to move forward with developing a Rural Land Management Plan, it will include input from community leaders, landowners and residents, as we work together to create a long-range plan for the future of Marion County's agricultural lands.

A Rural Land Management Plan is a plan for the entire rural area and all agricultural industries. This plan will help balance growth and protect our rural areas. The horse industry has an annual economic impact that exceeds \$2.6 billion. The economic impact of general agriculture is \$1.4 billion. The Plan will help protect this \$4 billion economic impact that is directly related to Marion County's rural landscape.

#### **Public Workshop about Rural Land Management Plan**

**DATE AND TIME:** Thursday, October 25 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM

**LOCATION:** McPherson Governmental Complex Auditorium, 601 SE 25th Ave., Ocala, FL

#### **Horse Country Protection Program Description**

The Equine Land Conservation Resource (ELCR) is partnering with the Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) on the *Horse Country Protection Program*, an educational initiative regarding the impact of urbanization on the economy, agricultural land, and natural resources of Marion County.

The American Farmland Trust (AFT) is also providing program support from a national perspective. Busy Shires Byerly is the Program Manager.

#### **Thank you to our generous donors for supporting this project!**

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