

## **Mike and Lisa Robertson to Pay Fine For Not Filing Report with USDA**

WASHINGTON, April 30, 2009 - Mike and Lisa Robertson (Robertson's), doing business as Robertson Horse Sales, Inc., Benson, Arizona, have been ordered to pay a \$1,000 civil penalty for not filing, on time, a required annual report with the Packers and Stockyards Program (P&SP) of USDA. The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona handled this case on behalf of USDA and negotiated a Settlement Agreement with the Robertson's.

All meat packers, live poultry dealers, market agencies and livestock dealers operating under the jurisdiction of the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921 are required by federal regulation to file reports annually. These reports provide critical information that Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) uses to ensure farmers and ranchers are financially protected when they sell their livestock. The Robertson's are registered with the Secretary of Agriculture to operate as a market agency selling on commission.

Their 2007 annual report, which was due on April 15, 2008, was not filed until August 14, 2008. Penalties for not filing the GIPSA annual report are set by law at \$110 per day for every day the report is late. The Robertson's face a full penalty of \$7,700 for filing their report 70 days late. Under the terms of the Settlement Agreement, however the Robertson's will pay \$1,000 in installments of \$84.00 per month beginning April 30, 2009, until paid in full.

If the Robertson's fail to timely file the required Annual Report of Market Agency for 2008, 2009, 2010 or become more than 2 months in arrears in payment, they will have defaulted on the settlement and the entire civil penalty of \$7,700 will be reinstated and become due as if no settlement had occurred.

The P&S Act is a fair trade practice and payment protection law that promotes fair and competitive marketing environments for the livestock, meat, and poultry industries.

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