

What does the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship do for the Equine Industry?

by Jill Paxton

In 1985 the Iowa legislature created the Horse and Dog Breeding Bureau within the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. To promote Iowa agriculture, the Bureau was designed to administer and regulate a Breeders Award program that would encourage and financially reward Iowa breeders of racing stock. Under the guidance of Secretary of Agriculture, Bill Northey, the Bureau continues to promote and regulate the Breeders Awards for Iowa bred racing stock, as it begins to broaden its efforts on behalf of all Iowa horses.

The economic impact by the combined Horse industries within Iowa is significant. Consumer expenditures to support the Iowa equine industry have a reported annual economic impact of **\$862.5 million**.

A study compiled by ISU in 2005, reported that Iowa has 200,000 horses on 35,800 farms, which ranks Iowa 17th in the nation for horse ownership. Iowa horse farms are viable agricultural businesses with horse owners owning nearly 6% of Iowa land, or approximately 2.1 million acres in all 99 counties.

It is important to note that more than 70 percent of horse owners live in rural communities of 50,000 or less. In fact, 145,000 Iowans are involved in the horse industry as owners, service providers, employees and volunteers. Thousands more participate as spectators. **In Iowa, a total estimated value of all equine-related assets is over \$10 billion, the Horse and Dog Bureau believes that horse owners have a voice that needs to be heard.**

How does the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship work on behalf of the Equine Industry?

The Horse and Dog Breeding Bureau regulates the Iowa Bred Program.

In order to strengthen Iowa agriculture, owners who breed, raise and race their animals in Iowa are financially rewarded through the Iowa Bred program. The breeder of an Iowa-foaled race horse is eligible for incentive monies in the form of Breeders Awards which are collected through Prairie Meadows Racetrack and dispersed through the Department of Agriculture to the owners and breeders.

Breeders Awards Programs:

Thoroughbreds

In 2007 Iowa Bred Thoroughbreds competed at more than 25 racetracks

around the country. These horses win money out of state and bring profits back to their Iowa owners and the Iowa economy.

Iowa Thoroughbred Breeders & Owners Association (ITBOA) is a nonprofit organization that promotes the breeding and racing of thoroughbreds in Iowa. The ITBOA currently represents nearly 500 Iowa-bred owners and breeders from Iowa and throughout the United States, and is active in a variety of thoroughbred-related programs.

Quarter Horses

The Iowa Quarter Horse Racing Association (IQHRA) is an organization of devoted Quarter Horse racing owners, breeders and enthusiasts working as a group dedicated to promoting and perpetuating Quarter Horse racing in the State of Iowa. The officials elected by its membership represent the Iowa Quarter Horse trainers and owners. The IQHRA, as a nonprofit organization, sponsors a variety of programs to compliment all aspects of the Quarter Horse racing industry and their youth in Iowa.

ITBOA and IQHRA Scholarship opportunities

The Prairie Meadows Youth Days Program held July 30 to August 2, 2008 sponsored by the IQHRA and the ITBOA offers 10 youths (ages 15-19) the opportunity to learn about racing. They will spend 4 days at the backside of the race track working with trainers and Prairie Meadows staff. At the end of the 4 days over \$16,000 in scholarships will be awarded.

Youth do **not** need to be ITBOA or IQHRA members. Applications must be received by June 1. For applications contact:

<http://www.iqhra.com>

Standardbreds

The Iowa Harness Horsemen's Association (IaHHA) is an organization dedicated to the owners, breeders, enthusiasts and their families who work with the Standardbred horses raised and raced within the state of Iowa for over 150 years.

The IaHHA continues to reflect the strong historical foundations it was built on... families sharing the sport together and passing on the tradition to the next generation. Over the summer, the IaHHA members race at the county fair tracks. In the fall the season culminates with the race meet at Prairie Meadows.

The Horse and Dog Breeding Bureau works with other horse programs.

Equine Task Force

The Iowa Equine Task Force was formed in 2004. The Task Force is an industry group devoted to promoting the collective interests of the State's equine industry. It meets monthly as it works to market, promote & unite the various equine disciplines. <http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/>

Iowa Horse Council

The Iowa Horse Council (IHC) represents all equine related interests. It hosts the annual Iowa Horse Fair every April; promotes the horse industry at the Iowa State Fair; supports programs developed by Iowa 4-H, FFA and youth equine groups; monitors national/international issues affecting Iowa's equine industry and communicates those issues to the horse industry.

The Iowa Horse Council provides grants and scholarship opportunities to Iowa Youth. For more information, please contact: Dora Guffey 515-989-0794, or <http://www.iowahorsecouncil.org/>

Iowa Incentive Program

The nationwide equine industry is undergoing an economic readjustment. The Department of Agriculture understands the strain on the Iowa Horse industry and is seeking proactive solutions. Breeders Programs build the supply side of the market. Incentive programs help to build the demand side of the market. The Horse and Dog (H&D) Bureau is researching the Kentucky Equine Education Project Incentive Program (KEEP) that has led to an annual \$4 billion economic impact on the Kentucky agricultural economy.

Jill Paxton (Bureau Chief) for the Iowa H&D Bureau has been traveling across the state meeting with groups (there is no fee) who are interested or have ideas to share regarding an Iowa Incentive program. Contact her at: horseanddogbreeding@iowaagriculture.gov

Slaughter Issues

The Iowa Horse Industry has felt the impact of the plant closings in Illinois and Texas. The Horse and Dog (H&D) Bureau seeks to compile and distribute information to Iowans on the pros and cons of the slaughter issues. *If you are interested in having a representative from the H&D Bureau share in your ideas regarding this or other issues of interest, please contact the

continued next page



Legislative Issues

Iowa Raises Fees for Cars and Trucks

Apr 22, 2008

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) - Governor Culver is to sign into law today a bill increasing fees on most new cars and trucks in Iowa to pay for road work.

The bill, approved last week, will eventually raise about 160 million dollars a year for road work -- without raising the state's gas tax. Backers say it's a big step toward filling a 200 million dollar annual shortfall for road repairs.

The biggest increase is for pickups, which have had a registration fee of \$65 dollars, largely because of farmers. Those fees will be set according to weight and value -- the same as cars and other vehicles -- and could easily triple.



AHC's Congressional Cavalry Program Grows

American Horse Council Press Release

Contact: American Horse Council ahc@horsecouncil.org



The Congressional Cavalry, organized by the American Horse Council and some of its member organizations, continues to grow. "The most recent organizations to sign on are the American Paint Horse Association, the American Quarter Horse Association, the American Saddlebred Horse Association, and the U.S. Equestrian Federation," said AHC President Jay Hickey. "They join the American Association of Equine Practitioners, the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association and the U.S. Trotting Association. We'd like to have many more of our member organizations participating by the end of the year."

The Congressional Cavalry was formed last year by the AHC in an effort to better represent and serve the horse industry before Congress. All horse owners, breeders, veterinarians, trainers, competitors, recreational riders, service providers, and anyone who desires to be involved in grassroots efforts in Washington may join the Congressional Cavalry.

"If we can involve just one person from a few of our member organizations in each Congressional district with an expressed desire to be involved in the grassroots effort, think of the potential effect that could have when contacting Representatives or Senators about issues important to the horse industry," said Hickey. "That's a lot of 'Horse Power'."

"Just like the real Cavalry, the Congressional Cavalry will be called upon when needed. This will not be a lot of work. Last summer, when the appropriations bill for the Department of Agriculture surfaced with a misguided provision that could have shut down the interstate and international movement of horses, we activated the Congressional Cavalry and other organizations and were able to point out the problems the bill would have caused. We got a great response and the provision was changed before the House voted on it," said Hickey.

The AHC will provide participants with whatever information is required to take action. Participants will be contacted as necessary and activated quickly. "We hope the Cavalry will eventually provide the base for additional activities like visits with Members of Congress back home; invitations to Members of Congress to visit a facility or event; and regular reports to Congress about activities back in the district that illustrate the importance of the horse industry to the state and local economy, sport and recreational life," said Hickey.

Anyone who wants to enlist in the Cavalry or has additional questions about the program should contact the American Horse Council at 202-296-4031 or ahc@horsecouncil.org.

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H & D Bureau. horseanddogbreeding@iowaAgriculture.gov

Horse and Dog Educational Committee

In the fall of 2007, members of the racing industry; representatives of the Iowa Horse and Dog Breeding Bureau; the members of the thoroughbreds, the racing quarter horses, the greyhound associations, and a member of the Newton prison program created an educational committee. This committee educates and

promotes the equine and racing industries by presenting information to area schools and organizations. For more information: horseanddogbreeding@iowaAgriculture.gov

NAIS

The Horse and Dog Bureau collects information and monitors the national NAIS legislation.

The Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship cares about the Iowa Equine Industry. The H&D Bureau seeks

ways to collect information to help and support the diverse equine industry in Iowa. If you have ideas or concerns you would like to share please contact: horseanddogbreeding@iowaAgriculture.gov

Please look for future articles from the H&D Bureau regarding the Iowa Incentive Program, Slaughter issues, scholarship opportunities for equestrians, the racing industry, and the NAIS.