

Equine Committee Report

2015 NIAA Annual Conference

Tuesday, March 24, 2015



The Equine Committee met on Tuesday, March 24, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. during the 2015 NIAA Annual Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana, with approximately 8 people present. Drs. Thomas Lenz and Carl Heckendorf served as Co-Chairs.

The Equine Committee session focused on the state of the equine industry. The following speakers presented relevant information pertaining to state of the equine industry and methods to improve interest and participation in the equine industry:

Keith Kleine, Industry Relations Director, American Association of Equine Practitioners, presented "State of the Equine Industry". Mr. Kleine focused on the economic status of the equine industry. Currently the economic outlook is increasing slowly. The sales of quality horses have improved as has the price for horses of somewhat lesser quality. Although transfers and registrations over the past ten years have declined, some of the breeds are currently seeing a slight increase. Quarter horses and paints are two groups that are showing a slight increase.

The demographics of the equine industry were discussed. The need for new statistics has become evident. The 2005 American Horse Council estimate of 9.2 million horses has been decreased to 6.6 million currently. Horse owners are predominantly female over 45 years old and have an income of \$75,000. 48 % ride western while 16% ride English. In general we are seeing declining horses and declining interest by youth.

Mr. Kleine also discussed industry issues such as welfare, legislation, slaughter, unwanted horses, BLM horses and race medications. Presently, we are shipping 150,000 horses to Canada and Mexico for slaughter. Currently, we have 48,000 BLM horses on public lands that can support 28,000. There are another 50,000 in sanctuaries.

Tom Lenz, DVM, MS, DACT, Zoetis, presented "Time to Ride Initiative". Dr. Lenz gave a very informative talk on the Time to Ride Initiative. The three main goals are to increase ownership, participation in events and to increase the public perception on the welfare of the horse. The Marketing Alliance of TTR appears to be well funded. Their research shows that mothers and young girls are the main group that they are trying to capture with their promotions. The secondary group is industry professionals. Their efforts have produced 48,000 pages on social media in just two years.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business:

- Resolutions 3 and 9 were reaffirmed. Resolution 7 was amended.

General Discussion: Under new business we discussed having a joint Infectious Diseases of Horses Forum with USAHA. All were in favor of the event. The issues that came forth were the timing, location and the need to solicit participation. Although no specific time was mentioned I believe the consensus was that it should not be in association with AAEP, as that makes for a very long meeting. Also brought up was to be a central location such as Dallas or Denver.

Equine Committee Session adjourned at 12:30 PM.