EHN Activities
2013 - 2014
2013 Activities

• 3 x Board meetings
  o New members
  o Commission
  o Stakeholders

• 3 x MEP lunch + leaflet
  o Equine Research (Jan.)
  o Equine Welfare (July)
  o Equine Health (Nov.)

• General assembly (Oct.)
**MEP Lunches**

- **MEP HORSE GROUP**
- **From June 2011 to March 2014**
  - 6 meetings
  - 6 MEPs attending (on average)
  - 6 thematic leaflets
  - 5 European Commission representatives invited
  - 9 topics discussed
    - CAP reform,
    - Sport,
    - Welfare,
    - Health,
    - Research,
    - Financing,
    - Transport,
    - Taxation,
    - Education
  - 20 active members
  - 70 MEPs interested
  - Attendance of meetings: 6 MEPs on 15 June 2011 - 13 MEPs on 25 January 2012 - 7 MEPs on 10 July 2012 - 5 MEPs on 24 January 2013 - 4 MEPs on 18 June 2013 - 4 MEPs on 27 November 2013
Equine Welfare

Animal Welfare Strategy

The EU’s Animal Welfare Strategy and Framework Law have the potential to impact the welfare of millions of European horses, ponies, donkeys, mules, and asses, by dealing with key issues such as transportation to slaughter, mistreatment, and the general welfare requirements of these animals. If the Animal Welfare Strategy and proposed Framework Law are to have an impact upon equine welfare in the EU, it is essential that they are based on well-researched and acceptable scientific evidence as that provided by ESHA. Research funds are needed to ensure that horse welfare legislation remains up to date and that the focus is on the welfare of the horse.

Horse Welfare

A horse crisis in Europe?

Horses and humans have evolved a unique partnership over many centuries, and to this day horses play an important role in society. This partnership is right as long as we take full responsibility for their welfare. Whether family pets, equine athletes, or used for leisure, agriculture, transport or even as food, horses contribute to lives, culture, and economies across Europe. The economic downturn has opened almost no one, and the impact on horses has been especially hard.

Keeping horses for any purpose is now a cost many cannot afford, and it is also becoming more difficult to find buyers for horses when owners are left with no choice but to sell. Horses at the lower end of the market are now virtually worthless in financial terms, putting them at increased risk of neglect or abuse or long-distance journeys to slaughter.

Horse welfare is integral to every aspect of the European horse industry. It is both important in its own right and vital to ensuring good performance, maintaining functionality and the safety of the food chain. The European horse industry has an annual economic impact of €1 billion – which means that equine welfare should be an issue of importance for policy makers across the EU.

EU five point plan

In last year’s European Commission overview of the Animal Welfare Strategy, progress was highlighted and an EU five-point plan to improve the welfare of horses was presented. The plan included:

1. Improvements to the current regulations on the transport of horses and the use of sedatives during transport.
2. A review of the EU’s animal welfare standards for equines, including the possible introduction of new standards.
3. Increased funding for research into equine welfare.
4. The establishment of a European network of equine welfare experts.
5. The creation of a European-wide certification scheme for equine welfare.

These recommendations are significant and could have a major impact on improving the welfare of horses in the EU. It is hoped that the implementation of these recommendations will lead to a significant improvement in the welfare of horses in Europe.
Equine Health

Equine health and welfare is pure human welfare

The welfare of the estimated more than 6 million horses in Europe has lately been shown to affect more people than just horse owners. The horse as an obligatory instrument for transport and labor in farming, in industry or for private purposes is no longer a rarity for most persons. Keeping of horses is today more widely connected with human leisure and wellbeing, although the role of the horse in maintaining and keeping forest and landscape must be recognized as vital in many cultures. However horses in many countries are also bred and slaughtered for human consumption.

The welfare of the horse is therefore closely connected with human welfare mainly as part of the leisure industry, but in many households also as a companion animal, that is a part of the family. The health and welfare of the horse does not only affect the more than 400,000 people in Europe that professionally works with them. It also has an enormous impact on the many families that keep, feed and use them in their everyday life.

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2014 Action Plan

• Board meeting (Jan., May, sept.)
  o Commison (Jan.), Dr. Füssel
  o Update key figures from 2010

• MEP lunc + Leaflet
  o March 19th: Horse & Education
  o Sept.: Horse & Social benefits

• Equus conference 2014 – WEG 2014
  o September 1st, Caen

• General assembly (Oct)
FEEVA and EHN in the future

- Membership?
  - Evaluation after three years
- Participation in EHN board?
  - Influence on politics
  - Meet with politicians and Commision
  - Substantial part of FEEVA budget
- Future possibilities
  - No participation in EHN board
  - New person put forward
  - Extend current position