



TAIEX Seminar EQUUS 2005

Programme

June 30 – July 2, 2005, Wolfpassing Castle near Wieselburg, Lower Austria

Conclusions

Throughout the centuries the horse has played a vital role in agriculture, farming, forestry, transportation of goods, trade, military purposes and sport.

Due to modernization and industrialization the role of the horse decreased in importance during the last century. But this trend has started to reverse during the last 30 years due to an increase in interest in horses for leisure and recreation, tourism, exporting and breeding.

The horse is special and is an integral part of society and civilization; as such there are a lot of interrelated issues and legislation governing horses and equidae. The legislation deals with:

- Definition of horses
- Registration and identification
- Animal welfare including transportation of horses
- Health and animal disease control measures
- Horse husbandry and keeping
- Breeding
- Importing

With this legislation and requirements, there is an increasing need for greater education and training of people working with horses. As we heard yesterday, special schools or networks of schools focusing on the equine issues are already being established and other existing educational institutions are introducing equine studies into their curricula.

The exchange of teaching staff and students as well as those working in the horse sector is becoming increasingly important as a means of exchanging knowledge, know how, and experience. The exchanges also allow people to see techniques, methods, equipment and environmental conditions that may not exist or be developed in one country are available or applicable in another country.



As we heard this morning from His Excellency Ambassador Woschnagg, the horse still plays a vital role in the economy and job creation.

- Working – agricultural farming, forestry, transportation of goods to and from rural areas
- Breeding
- Sport – racing (and betting), competitions (dressage, eventing, show jumping), tournaments
- Recreation and leisure - riding schools, trekking, tourism, riding holidays, etc
- Cultural – traditional events, cavalry shows, craft shows, etc.
- Environmental – rural development, landscape management (creation of bridal paths and tracks), countryside maintenance (pasture land, grazing areas)
- Educational – pedagogic for trainers, instructors etc, and also therapeutic and rehabilitation such as hippotherapy.
- Commercial/industrial – export of live horses and horses for slaughter, meat production

When looking at the role and in particular the economic role of horses, we should not only look at horses as the primary source, but also the secondary inputs:

- Associated, horse related by-products and services
- Modernization and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure including landscape conservation
- Benefits to the local area and population.

To conclude: There is a lot of potential but for this to be realized, all of us need to work together. There is the need for greater sharing of knowledge and experience, greater networking, greater information exchange, and continued education and training.

For example and to highlight a couple of points raised in these mornings presentations there is a need for cross border cooperation in the development of breeding and maintenance programs, especially for rare breeds, and the need to identify funding to support this cross border cooperation.

Also there is a need to carry out further research in the transportation of horses, particularly horses used for sport and hobby.