

The Economic Impact of the Colorado Horse Industry: A Summary

BY ALLISON SCHULTZ

The American Horse Council Foundation has released the results of the economic impact of the Colorado horse industry. The data were collected using information from surveys throughout the industry, and collected during 2004. The respondents were asked to report data from 2003. The results are as follows:

The state of Colorado boasts over a quarter of a million horses (256,000). The horse industry produces a total economic impact valued at approximately \$1.6 billion distributed in these activities: Racing (\$94 million), Showing (\$587 million), Recreation (\$607 million), and Other activities (\$276 million). Quarter horses sport the largest breed numbers in the state at 41.6% of total horses in Colorado. Thoroughbreds make up 7% of the Colorado horse population, and the remaining 51.4% are the rest of the horse breeds in the state.

Approximately 102,400 Coloradans are involved in the horse industry by participation or employment. Over half of those involved are horse owners (55,700), a third are volunteers (55,100), and a tenth are employees (11,600). The industry generates about 21,500 total jobs. Capital expenses such as structures and equipment account for 34% of spending for those in the industry, whereas 20% is spent on horse-related goods such as feed and tack, and another 21% is spent on horse related services such as boarding and training. 45% of Colorado horse owners have a household income of \$25,000 to \$74,999. 45% of horse owners are aged 45-59, 29% are ages 30-44, 15% are ages 18-29, and 11% are over 60. Please keep some of these figures on your mind to help be a strong advocate for the equine community.



Photo by Carol Walker