

Who and What

- The **Ocala Breeders' Sales Company** summer sale of two-year-olds in training and horses of racing age closed with a **39% drop in total sales** from 2008, and the lowest total since 2003. Average price fell more than 25% to the lowest level since 2000. Only six horses sold over the six-figure mark compared to 14 last year.
- **Churchill Downs Racetrack** in Louisville, Kentucky achieved success when it experimented with **nighttime racing** this summer. The evening race cards were offered in an attempt to draw more patrons to the track. With on-track handles of well over a million dollars each night, the experiment has shown that the public will support the venture.
- Phenylbutazone, or "**bute**," is commonly used to **relieve pain** in horses. Bute causes gastric disturbance in some horses, and a study at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine showed other reactions in horses treated with bute. Low blood protein concentrations (possible sign of leakage from the gut lining), decreased white blood cell count, and an imbalance of volatile fatty acids in the colon were also seen in treated horses.
- **DMSO**, a byproduct of the solvent industry, is sometimes used to **relieve swelling and inflammation**. Check with a vet before using DMSO, especially on a fresh injury. Used on an older injury, the substance can produce heat that acts in a therapeutic manner, but adding heat to a recent injury may be counterproductive.
- **Dried distillers grain (DDG)** is commonly **fed to cattle**, but the product is also showing promise as a mulch to suppress weeds and significantly enhance growth of some crops like tomatoes and turfgrass. Increased levels of ethanol production have led researchers to seek new uses for DDG.
- **Megaesophagus**, an abnormality that can lead to obstruction of the esophagus, is somewhat more common in Friesian horses than in the rest of the equine population, and the problem may be hereditary. Megaesophagus can cause **choke-like symptoms, pneumonia, colic, weight loss, and decreased appetite**.
- If your heart rate goes up, your horse's heart rate probably will rise also, according to a Swedish study. Handlers with various levels of experience walked or led horses along a track, having been told an umbrella would open suddenly on the fourth pass. When the humans' heart rates increased in anticipation of the event, the heart rates of the horses also increased. Horses instinctively react to their herdmates' signals of danger, and can obviously note subtle **signs of nervousness in their handlers** as well.
- A recent study of **emergency-room visits resulting from horse-related injuries** showed over 85% of injured horse enthusiasts were treated and released, seeming to indicate the injuries were not extremely serious. Fractures accounted for 28% of visits; another 28% were contusions/abrasions; and 14% were sprains or strains. Not everyone who is injured seeks treatment, so these figures don't necessarily represent all injuries that occurred.

- The Equine Disease Quarterly Newsletter from the University of Kentucky suggests these steps may **help decrease the spread of disease in stables**:
 - Isolate new horses, or those returning from a hospital stay, for several weeks.
 - Isolate any horse showing disease signs, and use disposable clothing (gloves, booties, overalls) for anyone coming in contact with the horse.
 - Care for and clean stalls of sick horses after caring for healthy animals, and disinfect tools before using them again.
 - Do not spread manure and bedding from sick horses on pastures.
 - Check with a veterinarian for help in developing a plan for disinfection of barns, horse trailers, and equipment.
 - Develop a schedule for regular cleaning and disinfecting of stalls, buckets, grooming tools, and stall cleaning equipment. Increase the frequency of these measures during any disease outbreak.
 - Provide running water, liquid soap/sanitizer, and paper towels in each barn, and encourage handlers to wash hands as they enter and leave barns.

- In preparation for the **World Equestrian Games** to be held at the Kentucky Horse Park (KHP) in 2010, the KHP has constructed an **air-conditioned indoor arena** with a floor measuring 300' by 135' and seating for more than 6000 spectators. The structure cost \$45 million to construct. It includes a 20,000-square-foot exhibition wing and a 10,000-square-foot reception hall, and adjoins three climate-controlled barns with 312 stalls. In addition to the WEG competition, the arena has been booked with more than 30 additional events to occur in the next three to four years.

- **Pergolide, a drug used to treat Cushing's disease**, can deteriorate if exposed to heat or light. A note in Equus Magazine recommends storing Pergolide in a cool, dark place such as a refrigerator, and purchasing fresh supplies of the product on a regular basis to be sure of getting the most benefit. Check with a veterinarian for suggestions on the use of this medication.

Wins and Wows

- The New England Turf Writers Association has named new members to its **Hall of Fame**. Racehorse Seabiscuit, jockey Chris McCarron, trainer Ned Allard, breeder Gil Campbell, and reporter Dave Wilson were honored by the association.

- **The Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame** has honored Alan Leavitt and Tom Crouch, founders and developers of important breeding farms, as well as seven other industry leaders. Also inducted were Standardbred horses Miss Easy, Muscles Yankee, Big Towner, and Nan's Catch.

- The American Horse Council has bestowed its **Rolapp Award** on U. S. Congressman Ben Chandler of Kentucky. The award honors a member of Congress who has shown outstanding support for the horse industry. Among other things, Chandler has provided continued assistance in bringing the 2010 World Equestrian Games to Kentucky, working to secure federal funding for the infrastructure needed to host the event.

- The Shea Therapeutic Riding Center in California has honored Dr. Richard Markwell with its **Michael Lewis Friends of the Disabled Award**. Markwell, an equine veterinarian who cares for the riding center's therapy horses free of charge, has also treated horses competing in the Olympic Games and the World Cup.

- Iowa horse enthusiast Sally Blount has received the **2009 Van Ness Award** from the American Horse Council. Blount worked to pass Iowa's Equine Liability legislation; served on the state's Horse Council board for almost 30 years; was a representative to the Horse Council Advisory Committee; and helped to publish Iowa Horse