

Findings and Conclusions

Respondent Participation in the Equine Industry

To profile the nature of involvement in the Alberta equine industry, it was important to determine the nature and extent of respondent involvement. The highest participation was as an owner, followed by sport-recreational riders, competitors and breeders. The following table provides the frequency of participation selections.

My Participation in the Equine Industry is as:	Percentage Frequency of Selection	My Participation in the Equine Industry is as:	Percentage Frequency of Selection
Boarding of Horses	16.2%	Owner	83.4%
Breeder	42.5%	Sport-Recreational Rider	68.2%
Competitor	52.2%	Product Supplier	6.9%
Equine Center Manager	4.2%	Service Provider (vet, farrier, etc.)	6.3%
Farm/ranch Manager	23.7%	Training	28.7%
Judging/Official/Show Organizer	8.3%	Other	9.3%

Table 4. Participation in the Equine Industry

The “other” group included: import/export agent, outfitters, photographers, web-designers, pleasure drivers, “showing horses”, racing horses, grooms, publishers, saddle makers, equine aroma therapists, web-site e-commerce, cowboys, sales representatives, and 4-H members. The results demonstrate a broad spectrum of interest and involvement that provides for a strong profile of stakeholders within the industry.

Involvement With Other Livestock

The study sought to determine if those who were involved with the equine industry also had involvement with other livestock, which provided additional livestock familiarity or other income. The results were that 36.2% indicated that they owned other livestock while 63.8% did not. Of those who did (respondents could select more than one choice), their livestock was cattle (75.4%), swine (3.7%), sheep (10.8%) and other (28.8%). The following table (Table 6) depicts the livestock found in “other”. Again, the results confirm that farmers and ranchers who are associated with the equine industry tend to be heavily involved with the cattle industry as well.

Other Livestock Reported Owned			
(n=55)			
Livestock	%	Livestock	%
Goats	19.4	Birds/fowl	8.2
Donkeys	18.5	Dairy	4.6
Poultry	16.5	Elk	3.6
Bison	9.2	Mules	2.1
Dogs	8.7	Rabbits	1.0
Llamas	8.2		

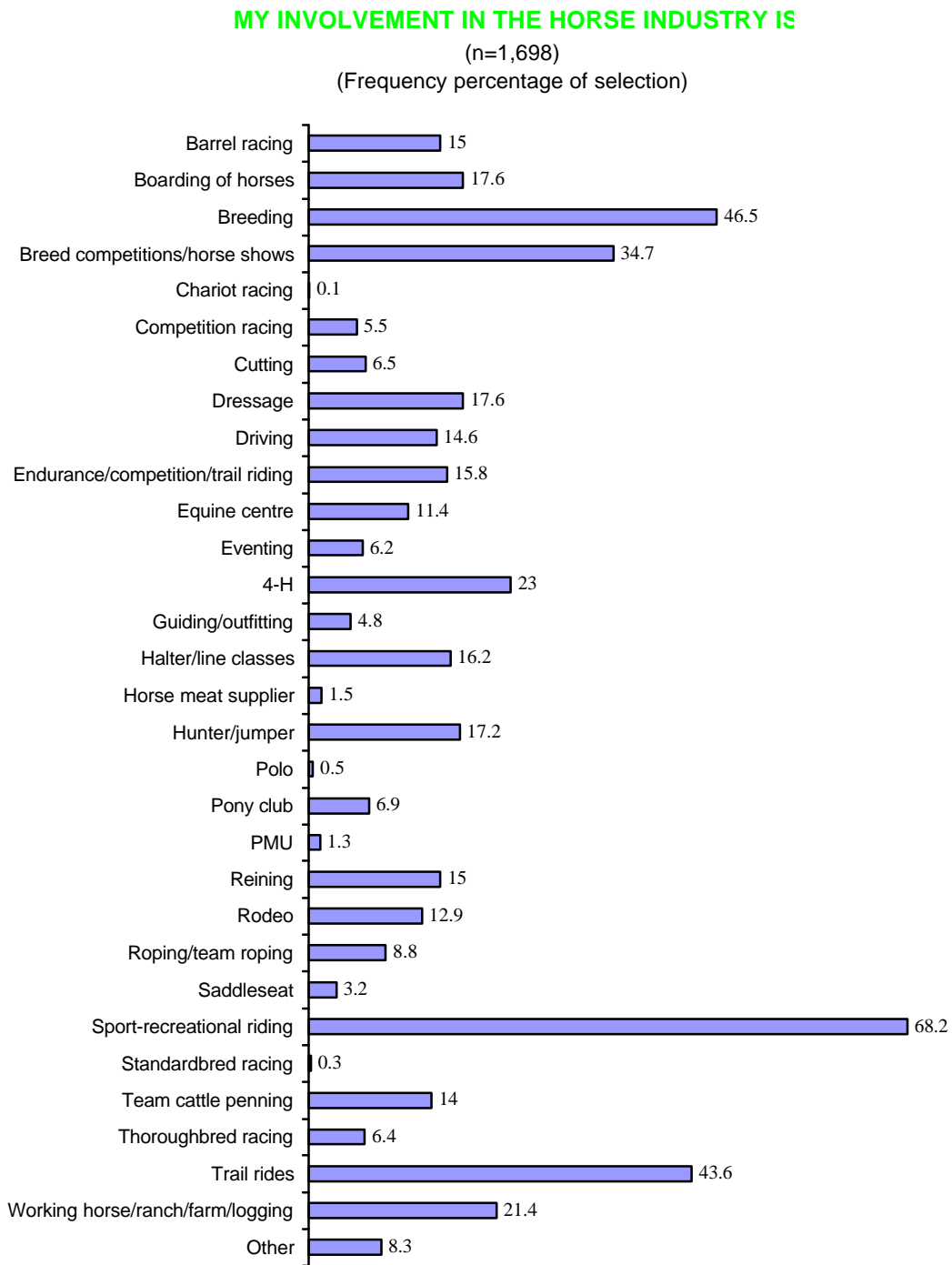
Table 5. Other Livestock Reported Owned

Extent of Involvement by Stakeholders

To determine how the Alberta horse industry and the Association can become involved and build substantial credence with horse stakeholders, it is important to assess the extent to which the stakeholder is involved. Respondents were asked to describe their involvement in the horse industry. The question allowed respondents to identify more than one source of involvement. The frequency of their choice(s) is illustrated in the following Graph 5 found on page 10, which depicts the total respondent group. The top three areas of involvement are: sport-recreational (68.2%), breeding (46.5%) and trail rides (43.6%).

There are many other areas identified by participants that may be part of an individual's overall involvement in the industry. "Other" involvement in the industry included:

- ❖ Working cow horse
- ❖ Coaching/lessons
- ❖ Parades and demonstrations
- ❖ Gymkhana
- ❖ Competitive racing
- ❖ Riding camps/trail rides/packing in mountains
- ❖ Carriage driving
- ❖ Therapeutic use of horse, such as instruction for people with disabilities
- ❖ Administration/executive/board of directors of clubs
- ❖ Veterinarians
- ❖ Farriers
- ❖ Association volunteers
- ❖ Editorials
- ❖ Insurance industry related to farming and clubs



Graph 5. My Involvement In The Horse Industry Is

The following table represents a cross-tabulation of sport-recreational and business stakeholders, with other types of activities they have participated in.

SPORT-RECREATIONAL OR BUSINESS OWNERS BY INVOLVEMENT

	Primary Interest Sport-recreational	Primary Interest Business	Total
	(Frequency percentage of selection)		
Barrel racing	12.2	2.8	15.0
Boarding of horses	10.2	7.4	17.6
Breeding	27.1	19.4	46.5
Breed competitions/horse shows	24.3	10.4	34.7
Chariot racing (%rounded off)	0.1	0.1	0.2
Competition racing	2.4	3.1	5.5
Cutting	4.2	2.3	6.5
Dressage	13.0	4.6	17.6
Driving	10.4	4.2	14.6
Endurance/competition/trail riding	13.1	2.7	15.8
Equine center (training, etc.)	5.4	6.0	11.4
Eventing	4.8	1.4	6.2
4-H	17.9	5.1	23.0
Guiding/outfitting	3.1	1.7	4.8
Halter/line classes	11.0	5.2	16.2
Horse meat supplier	0.6	0.9	1.5
Hunter/jumper	12.6	4.6	17.2
Polo	0.4	0.1	0.5
Pony Club	5.5	1.4	6.9
PMU	0.5	0.8	1.3
Reining	10.6	4.4	15.0
Rodeo	9.7	3.2	12.9
Roping/team roping	5.8	3.0	8.8
Saddleseat	2.3	1.0	3.2
Sport-recreational riding	56.8	11.4	68.2
Standardbred racing	0.1	0.2	0.3
Team cattle penning/sorting	11.0	3.0	14.0
Thoroughbred racing	2.8	3.6	6.4
Trail rides	37.0	6.6	43.6
Working horse/ranch/farm/logging	14.2	7.2	21.4
Other	5.7	2.6	8.3

Table 6. Sport-recreation or Business Owners By Involvement

Conclusions

The equine industry in Alberta has been growing and changing for many years. The survey sought to determine the areas of participation and involvement of horse owners. The majority of horse owners reported owning horses for sport-recreational riding. This is consistent with the above data showing

sport-recreational riders at 76% of the total surveyed population. Breeding and breed-oriented competition were well represented in the survey population.

Again, it is apparent, the majority of involvement in the equine industry was that of sport-recreational riding. Breeding, trail rides and breed competitions/horse shows were the other significant areas of involvement. There was a lower representation by the chariot racing, polo and standardbred racing communities. Other sectors within the equine industry were reported as: working cow/horse, coaching/lessons, gymkhanas, racing, riding camps/trail rides/packing in mountains, administration, veterinarians, farriers, editorials and the insurance end of the horse industry. The variety of responses indicate strong diversity within the industry.

It was further determined that 36.2% of horse owners also own other livestock, with cattle being predominant. Swine, sheep, goats, donkeys, poultry, bison, dogs, llamas, birds/fowl, dairy, elk, mules, and rabbits were all mentioned as other livestock maintained by horse owners.

Alberta Horse Population

The number of horses, as determined by this survey, accounts for approximately 17,224 or 5+% of the total horse population within Alberta. To further profile the nature of the horse population within Alberta, respondents were asked 1) the age(s), 2) breed(s) of their horse(s), and 3) the number of horses within each breed.

The first question was to determine the age distribution of the equine stock. The majority of the respondents indicated that their horses were between the ages of four and twelve years of age with the largest age category being the six to eight years of age group (59.9%). The smallest group was that of horses over the age of 21 years. The frequency of their choice(s) is illustrated in the following graph.