

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) Equine Protection Program

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) Equine Protection Program has several new programs and initiatives aimed at

- helping the equine rescue and sanctuary community to succeed in its mission to provide care for and rehome at-risk horses in the United States
- educating horse owners and the public about (and raising) the appropriate level of responsible, humane horse care.

Programs and initiatives include:

Homes for Horses: Addressing the rehoming of American horses at risk

1. First Annual Homes for Horses Conference – sponsored in conjunction with the Animal Welfare Institute - Washington, DC July 2007: a conference of animal welfare and equine protection groups, horse rescues and sanctuaries to discuss the causes of equine abuse and neglect, the options available for the rehoming and retraining of equines, the challenges the entities face and the needs and prospects for the future. Future plans/projects include an equine rescue/sanctuary coalition and national accreditation program.

2. Horse Rescue, Sanctuary and Retirement Home Survey and Database: The HSUS is conducting a survey of the horse rescue, sanctuary and retirement community across the U.S. to identify the total number of organizations, their total capacity and their geographic distribution. A national horse rescue database will be compiled from the survey results and will be used to facilitate better communication between the HSUS and the rescue community as well as assist law enforcement, animal control officers, individual horse owners, and others with an interest in horse rescue to identify horse rescues in their communities.

3. Partnership with Pets911 Pet Adoption Network: In support of its goal to help the rescue community find more permanent, loving homes for horses, The HSUS has partnered with the Pets911 Pet Adoption Network to create a new horse adoption search engine specifically aimed at promoting the many adoptable horses awaiting new homes at horse rescues across the country. The site is accessible both through the HSUS and Pets911 homepages, greatly increasing the visibility of adoptable horses to the horse-owning public. Future plans include banner advertising on humane group, equine organization and horse sale websites.

4. Parelli Natural Horsemanship, Inc./HSUS Lending Library: World-renowned natural horsemanship trainers, Pat and Linda Parelli, have donated copies of their Level I and Level II natural horsemanship training programs to The HSUS for loan to the horse rescue community. The goal of this partnership is to give horse rescues greater access to

tools and information that will enable them to gain better results when evaluating and re-training rescued horses for adoption.

5. Equine Seminars at Animal Care Expo (May 14-18, 2008; Orlando, FL): The 2008 session of Animal Care Expo, the largest of its kind in the world, will include several specialized equine programs, covering topics like: equine care, equine rescue operations, and equine industry issues. In addition to these and many other workshops, Animal Care Expo includes an Exhibit Hall and international trade show, all aimed at providing animal care professionals and volunteers with the tools and information they need to succeed in their mission of helping animals in need.

6. Hay for Horses Fund: In 2006, the HSUS established the Hay for Horses Fund, to help 501c3 horse rescue organizations in drought stricken areas to purchase hay. In the winter of 2006, four organizations benefited from the fund, helping to provide needed hay to hundreds of horses.

7. Equine Cruelty Investigation training course for animal control and law enforcement officers: Too often a lack of familiarity with equine care and cruelty issues hinders these public servants from becoming effectively involved in the disposition of such cases. HSUS plans to help turn that tide by providing the crucial expertise needed for successful investigation of equine cruelty cases.

“Horses: Companions for Life”, a program promoting responsible horse ownership at all stages of a horse’s life

1. The HSUS Guide to Equine Care: In 2008, the Humane Society Press will publish “The HSUS Complete Guide to Equine Care”. The book, aimed at both the first time and seasoned horse owner, covers a wide range of topics including: choosing the right horse; feeding, housing, veterinary and hoof care; riding, training and competition; and end-of-life decisions and options. The equine care guide is the cornerstone of the HSUS “Horses: Companions for Life” Program.

2. Informational Brochures and Booklets: The HSUS currently has a number of brochures and booklets available on a variety of horse-related issues and topics. Current publications include: Disaster Preparedness for Horses, Make your Horse Barn Fire Safe and Tips for Preventing Your Horse from Being Lost or Stolen. Future topics will include: Basic Horse Care Guidelines and Considerations Before Becoming a Horse Owner.

3. Resource List of Horse Disposal Options: When faced with making end-of-life decisions for their equine companions, many horse owners do not know what burial and removal options are available to them. The HSUS is in the process of compiling a list of resources to help horse owners across the country understand the cost and availability of horse burial and disposal in their communities.

4. “Companions for Life” Barn Poster Series: As part of the HSUS “Horses: Companions for Life” program, the first in a series of barn posters aimed at providing basic horse care and handling tips to horse owners has been released. The first poster covers the basic physical, emotional and social needs of horses.

Ongoing and Future Projects:

Work with breed registries to encourage more responsible breeding practices
Encourage equine mortality insurance carriers to provide euthanasia insurance
Conduct symposiums on Horse Care for new and prospective horse owners

Interested in taking action online to help animals? Then join our online community! Go to:

<https://community.hsus.org/humane/join>