

## **A Call for a Unified Voice: The Viability and Vitality of the Equine Industry in the Garden State Depends Upon It**

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In New Jersey, where the horse is the state animal, the equine industry is invaluable as a major factor for improving the quality of life for New Jersey residents by preserving open space, providing outdoor sport and recreation, building a solid foundation for youth development, and providing mental and physical therapy to adjudicated youth and handicapped persons.

The New Jersey equine industry, valued at \$4 billion, produces an economic impact of \$1.1 billion comprised of the \$278.2 million spent annually for racing-related operations, not including racetracks; \$262.4 million spent annually by non-racing operations, \$117.8 million spent annually by equine owners without operations, \$502 million spent annually by New Jersey racetracks. The industry employs approximately 13,000 persons and generates \$160 million in tax revenue, annually. Horses are found on 7,200 facilities on 176,000 acres in every county statewide. (The New Jersey Equine Industry: 2007 Economic Impact, Rutgers Equine Science Center).

Horse racing and the horse industry are essential to the well-being of New Jersey in many ways. There exists a delicate the balance between the future of horse racing, the preservation of the New Jersey equine industry and the importance of the equine industry to traditional agricultural, open space and quality of life for the residents of the state.

### **Why should non-racing equine interests care about racing's future?**

Racing is not the only equine discipline that will lose if New Jersey racing does not receive the "shot in the arm" it so desperately needs, by expanding casino gaming outside of Atlantic City.

- The future of young people who would like to make a living in the horse industry in New Jersey is in jeopardy. Why stay?
- The New Jersey Equine Advisory Board's (EAB) annual budget to support the Horse Park of New Jersey and the sport and recreation segments of the horse industry, predominantly, including 4-H Youth Development programs is correlated to a percentage of the pari-mutuel handle from racing. The EAB annual budget which was \$498,000 in 1990 declined to a new low of \$162,500 in 2015. This budget will disappear if racing is not saved in New Jersey.
- The "top shelf" level of services New Jersey horse enthusiasts have come to expect such as equine veterinary clinics and feed and supply stores are at risk, because, while they are frequented and supported by sport horse competition and

recreational users, a predominant economic flow to these entities is from the racing industry.

- The entire infrastructure supporting ALL segments of the horse industry is in jeopardy.

The racing industry was there to support the development of the Horse Park of New Jersey, which exists primarily for non-racing interests. It is time for the **entire** industry to rally around once and for all to let the public and the legislature know that the future of horse racing in New Jersey will impact horse owners of every breed and discipline; as it will open space, traditional agricultural production and quality of life. Use the tool kit (Economic Impact Report and the accompanying DVD; available at **esc.rutgers.edu**) provided by the Rutgers Equine Science Center to tell the story of the importance of the New Jersey Equine Industry to legislators and policy decision makers. YOU can make a difference.