

## 'OK, Boss – What Do You Want Me To Do Next?'

**The MHIB is WORKING FOR YOU, and we need your input ...**

by J. Robert Burk  
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Every year, we talk about how busy the Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) has been, and we cover just exactly what the MHIB has been up to. The reason for this is that the MHIB is WORKING FOR YOU! Seriously, folks, you are funding this board -- so it is your choice whether the board continues on the path it is taking or whether it ceases to exist. If you weren't our boss, we probably wouldn't be reporting to you. In fact, every couple of years, the MHIB has to prove to the Maryland state legislature that it is doing what it was tasked to do in 1998, or it will cease to exist. The tasks given to the MHIB are written in state law and include:

- License and inspect stables operating as businesses for basic animal welfare and consumer safety
- Advise the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) regarding matters affecting the horse industry in the state
- Support research related to equine health and related issues
- Promote the development and use of horses in the state
- Create public awareness of the value of equine activities as they relate to the preservation of green space and agricultural land
- Develop and disseminate information concerning the equine industry, including the history and tradition of breeding and the role of horses in recreational activities

So has the MHIB been doing its job? You be the judge. Some of the accomplishments of the MHIB over the past several years include:

1. **Licensing 504 stables to date in the current fiscal year (FY 2007).** That is

an increase of 124 stables since FY 2003. At the same time, we have inspected more facilities than were licensed for the past three years.

2. The MHIB meets monthly to advise the MDA on industry issues, and in 2004 the MHIB hosted the **Maryland Horse Forum**, at which more than 250 horse industry leaders met and defined the issues affecting the industry, also drafting a report for the administration containing recommendations on how to better serve the industry.
3. **Distributing 137 grants and more than \$150,000 to nonprofit and not-for-profit organizations in the state since 1999.** Research related to equine health has received more than 20% of those funds.
4. **Expanding the MHIB grant program to cover promotion of the industry, public facility development, adult and youth education, therapeutic riding, and rescue organizations.** Moreover, the MHIB has championed and funded the establishment of a Maryland Horse Park since 1998.
5. **Conducting the 2002 Maryland Equine Census**, which established that equine operations hold approximately 685,000 acres of the state's land, or 10% of Maryland (with over 206,000 used specifically for horses). Using this information, the MHIB launched the "What the Horse Industry Means to Maryland" campaign. This campaign resulted in a renaissance in the political and public recognition of the industry's importance, although there is still work to be done.
6. **Funding and participating in numerous educational projects, art exhibits and outreach efforts relating to the profound impact of the horse industry upon the establishment and existence of the state.** Some grant recipients have included the Maryland Light Dragoons, Friends of Linden,

the "It All Began Here in Annapolis" equestrian art exhibition, and the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation.

However, while the MHIB was given the mission of accomplishing all of these incredible goals, it was not permanently funded. So in order to accomplish all of these tasks, the MHIB and the Maryland Horse Council worked together to establish the Maryland Equine Feed Assessment and the Maryland Horse Industry Fund in 2002.

This is the sole source of funding for all of the MHIB's activities. The feed assessment is derived directly from the feed you purchase for your horse, and in fact any feed that is sold in Maryland that is labeled or implied for use by equines. The assessment equals five cents per 50 pound of feed, and has resulted in about \$1.00 paid on average per horse per year. While \$89,000 a year might seem like a good amount of money, it is less than 1/3 of what others states such as Virginia, New Jersey, or North Carolina are sinking into similar programs -- even though Maryland has almost twice as many horses per square mile as those states. For these reasons, the MHIB is looking for your input. Is the MHIB serving you well? Do you think that the MHIB is doing enough, or too much? Do you think there is a better way to fund the activities of the MHIB? Do you believe that the MHIB should have more money for its grant programs and other industry programs? Please take a minute to fill out the following survey and return it to the MHIB, or e-mail your comments to [BurkJR@mda.state.md.us](mailto:BurkJR@mda.state.md.us). The MHIB thanks you! For more information on the MHIB and the Maryland Equine Feed Assessment and to track how your dollars are being spent, visit [www.marylandhorseindustry.org](http://www.marylandhorseindustry.org).

**You can also return surveys or speak with MHIB board members at the Maryland Horse World Expo (Booth 905) and the Pennsylvania Horse World Expo (Booth 245).**

# Maryland Horse Industry Survey

## Survey Due Before: February 26, 2007

This document may be filled out by an individual, or as a representative of an organization or business.

<b>Name / Title:</b>	
<b>Name of Organization or Business:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Telephone:</b>	<b>E-mail:</b>

**The following is a list of projects currently underway through the MD Horse Industry Board.  
For each project listed below, circle the number to the right that best describes its importance to you or your organization.**

Project	Scale of Importance				
	Not at all	Not very	No Opinion	Somewhat	Extremely
Establishing a MD Horse Park and Agricultural Education Center	1	2	3	4	5
Establishing an International Import/ Export Facility for Equine in MD	1	2	3	4	5
Grant Funding for Nonprofit Equine Organizations in MD	1	2	3	4	5
Increasing Access to and Facilities for Public Use in Each MD County (Showgrounds, Trail Heads, Camping Sites, Auction Facilities)	1	2	3	4	5
Increasing Availability and Access to Public Horse Trails in MD	1	2	3	4	5
Creating a Public Notification System in Time of Equine Emergency in MD	1	2	3	4	5
Increasing Breeding Incentives and Purses for all MD Equine Sports	1	2	3	4	5
Obtaining Lower Insurance Rates for MD Equine Operations	1	2	3	4	5
Increasing Access to Agricultural Programs Offering Assistance and Funding	1	2	3	4	5
Conducting the Maryland Equine Census and Economic Impact Study	1	2	3	4	5

**Please take a moment to tell us more about you and/or your organization/business.**

<p>If you are filling this out for a business or organization, how many members are in your business or organization?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Between 51 and 100</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Greater than 100 – Please estimate _____</p>	<p>Type of equine industry involvement: (please check all that are applicable)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Breeding                      <input type="checkbox"/> Horse Showing (Showing/ Competition)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Riding        <input type="checkbox"/> Service Provider (Vet, Farrier, Specialist)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Racing                            <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>
<p>Are you familiar with the MD Horse Industry Board and its purpose?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No (Visit <a href="http://www.marylandhorseindustry.org">www.marylandhorseindustry.org</a>)</p>	<p>Do you support the current activities of the MD Horse Industry Board?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Please Explain? _____</p>
<p>Would you support an increase in the MD Feed Assessment to achieve any of the above projects?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Please Explain? _____</p>	<p>The Maryland Feed Assessment is currently 5 cents per 50 pound bag of equine feed (\$2.00 per ton), how much of an increase would you support?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Increase</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 2 cents more per bag (\$0.40 - \$0.80 per ton)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3 to 4 cents per bag (\$1.20 - \$1.60 per ton)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 cents per bag (\$2.00 per ton)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> &gt; 5 cents per bag How much more? _____</p>

**Additional Comments (Attach Additional Pages as Necessary):**

**Do you have any other ideas for projects the MD Horse Industry Board should be working on?**

**Do you have any ideas on additional sources of funding that the MD Horse Industry Board could utilize other than the feed assessment?**

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY!**

**Fax your completed survey to 410-841-5999,  
or email comments to [info@marylandhorseindustry.org](mailto:info@marylandhorseindustry.org)**

**Or mail it to:**

**J. Robert Burk, Maryland Horse Industry Board, 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401**