

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION LEADS TO INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Back in June 2007, Canada's federal government announced that it would invest just over \$400,000 in support of the ongoing international market development work of Equine Canada's Breeds & Industry Division.

"The partnership of industry and government to advance Canada's equine sector as a producer of world-class horses is critical to the long-term success of our value-added agriculture industry," said Equine Canada President Al Patterson at the time. He promised that the equine industry would match the government grant dollar for dollar for a total budget of more than \$800,000.

The funding invested by the federal government will be used in 47 projects spearheaded by 13 member breed associations participating in the Equine Canada Export Market Development Strategy in 2007-2008 which aims to "brand Canada" as a quality producer of horses suitable for racing, FEI and non-FEI sport, breed specific competition, recreation and breeding. Projects include the development of generic promotional materials for distribution outside of Canada, attendance at international trade shows and meetings, training in export preparedness, and the hosting of foreign delegates coming to Canada to view Canadian-bred stock. The target markets include Australia, Brazil, Chile, the Caribbean, France, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, and the United States.

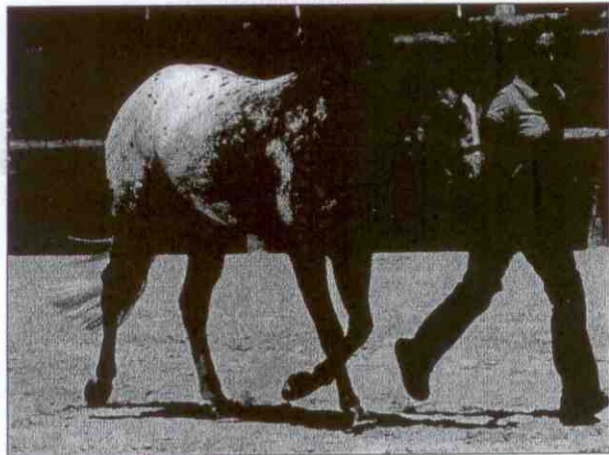
To this end Equine Canada was host to a Breeds & Industry Round Table discussion on November 8, 2007 during the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto, Ontario, the purpose of which was to educate Canadian breeders, and those with a stake in the industry, on the best ways of promoting and expanding their businesses.

"The challenge of many horse breeders in Canada is to effectively promote them," said Susan Stewart, Equine Canada Breeds & Industry Division Co-ordinator, Export Market Development. "Their goal is to connect with both export and domestic consumers to market their horses for sale. In doing so, it is imperative that standards expected by today's buyer are known. It is also important that a connection with the consumer occurs in a way that will ensure good business practices and deep relationships, for now and in the future."

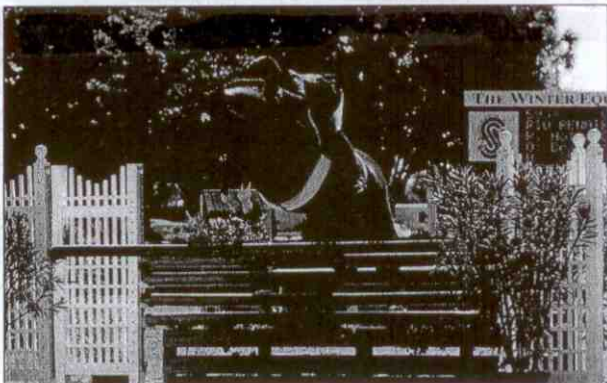


Carrick, was bred in Canada and sold to the US. The Canadian Sport Horse gelding (by Cozy's Commander out of a Northern Mystic mare) led the US team to gold at the 2002 WEG under John Williams and finished fourth individually. Bred by Doug Dean, Carrick placed second at the 4 star Rolex Kentucky in 2002.

Canadian breeders and key stakeholders from the equine sport community met for the two hour session with a selection of FEI Delegates from Group IV (Antigua, Barbados, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, US Virgin Islands, and USA). It is interesting to note that the delegates indicated that Germany was their main source for horses and the individual riders' coaches had the greatest influence on the riders' choices of horses. It was



The Canadian-bred Appaloosa Good Advice was bred by Kevin and Julie Bridgeman in Manitoba and sold to Aurelie Dekoster and Vincent Mazin of France.



Hunter champion Rio Renoir (Holly Orlando) was bred by W Charlot Farms and is by their flagship stallion Rio Grande.

also noted that in North America it is proper protocol to deal with coaches and important to respect that relationship and not circumvent it. According to the session summary, the whole process of buying horses in North America "is very confusing, because there can be many parties involved at many levels and because of that, in the opinion of some, it has stagnated business."

Following the lengthy round table discussion with questions covering a wide range of topics from commission fees, pre-purchase protocol and veterinary reports, to marketing and assessing potential costs and financial returns, it was recommended that action be taken in the following areas. International buyers would be interested in Canadian-bred horses if they could find them easily. The international participants agreed that if they were looking for horses in Canada they would first look at the

national federation website (www.equinecanada.ca) for a list of breeders and sellers.

Breeders in Canada and international buyers need centralized access to up-to-date information on health permits, quarantine regulations, inspection procedures and changing government regulations (both domestic and international) concerning import/export of blood stock, embryos and semen, and international transportation. Help is needed to connect Canadian breeders with Canadian riders, drivers and trainers.

Sport disciplines see a need to expand Canadian-bred equine futurities and young horse development programs. Further development of a centralized database to link all equestrian sport results with pedigrees is needed.

Horses' bloodlines and breeders' names need to be included in all Equine Canada communications (e.g. discipline media guides, press releases, etc.) and horse shows should require it on entries and publish it in prize lists and on the order-of-go sheets.

Equine sale prices should be published when possible.

Commission rates on equine sales need to be regulated.

Equine Canada should work with the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association to promote a standardized pre-purchase veterinary exam.

Dressage Canada should be requested to work with the Equine Canada Breeds & Industry Division to encourage a better working relationship between the breeders and the disciplines that would leave us with a stronger "win-win" relationship. The goal is to achieve this or more within the next twelve months.

Finally, Breeder of the Year awards need to be developed in Canada. □