

Horses in Agriculture, Recreation and Sport

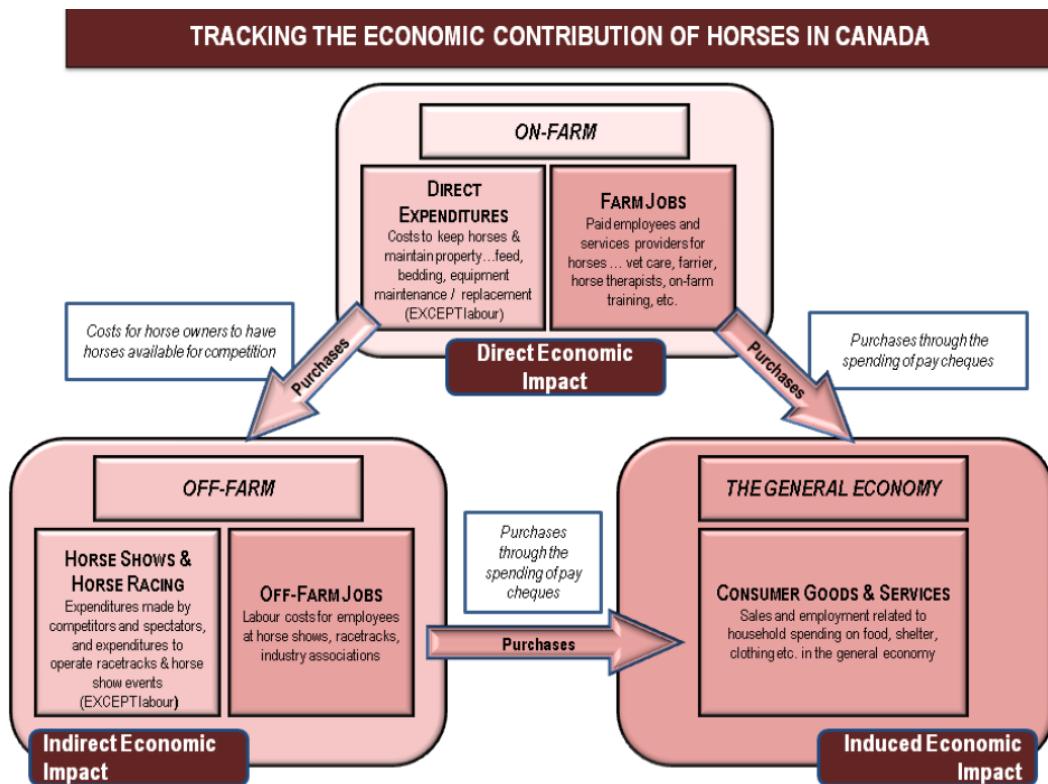


The horse has come a long way since being domesticated by mankind. Early in our evolution horses were important to providing fast transportation to mankind. They helped to speed up migration, trade, and communication between cultures. They helped languages and cultures spread around the world. As well, they helped people do work, from plowing fields to hauling goods. Horses have had an incredible role in shaping our world. Horses in Canada are primarily employed as active components of commercial businesses. As other livestock in Canada are kept primarily for food production (e.g., poultry, dairy and beef cattle, and hogs), there is often the perception that equines are recreational or companion animals, rather than livestock. Active equines can be employed in variety of ways from riding lessons, to therapy and assisted learning.

Equestrian Canada (EC) is the national governing body for equestrian sport and industry in Canada, with a mandate to represent, promote and advance all equine and equestrian interests. With over 18,000 sport licence holders, 90,000 registered participants, 11 provincial/territorial sport organization partners and 10+ national equine affiliate organizations, EC is a significant contributor to the social, physical, emotional and economic wellbeing of the equestrian industry across Canada. EC is a member of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA).

The horse industry is unique amongst agricultural sectors in the degree to which economic contribution is realized. It makes an economic contribution both as an agricultural production sector and as a sport-recreation activity sector.

- The equine industry has direct links to other agricultural industries: Internal analysis using 2016 Census of Agriculture data projects that Canadian equine operations purchase between \$910 million and \$1.3 billion in hay, grain, and bedding each year. The Horse Council of BC estimates that the province's horse industry spends \$125 million annually on feed and bedding. Equines require services of veterinarians just like livestock farmers: Internal analysis using 2016 Census of Agriculture data²³ projects that Canadian equine operations spend approximately \$350 million on veterinary and farrier services²⁴ each year. Equine businesses follow virtually all of the same government regulations as livestock farmers (e.g., animal welfare, transportation regulations). Equine businesses are part of the agricultural equipment economy. Like livestock farmers, equine business owners have animal insurance. Equine businesses worry about animal viral outbreaks, similar to livestock farmers.



As an agricultural sector it is unique in that it fits within the urban, suburban and rural aspect of society. Horses contribute to our communities as partners with law enforcement officers in urban settings, in preserving pastureland and grazing lands that beautify the suburban and rural settings. Beyond the notable economic impact that horses bring to a community, it has also been proven scientifically that horses help humans physically, mentally and emotionally.

Challenges facing the horse industry in the future are many. The industry is watching very closely the controls and measures used to manage COVID 19 in the human population. Similar measures will be used to manage diseases in the horse. The horse industry is working on identification and traceability programs to follow the movement of horses and manage disease. It strives to maintain the economic

viability and a strong social license of its sport and recreation programs knowing it must compete with a growing number of entertainment venues available to the public. As well, safe sport for horse and rider is the foundations of developing programs as; frangible jump building improvements, race track surfaces to concussion protocols, responsible coaching movements . Disciplines in horse sport are the only sports involving two athletes: man and horse at the Olympic and world stage.

There is a place for everyone in their interactions with horses, whether it be learning to ride at any age, or through a variety of rewarding career paths For more information in getting involved in the Equine Industry see visit www.Equestrian.ca.