

# The Future of the Professional Horse Trainer



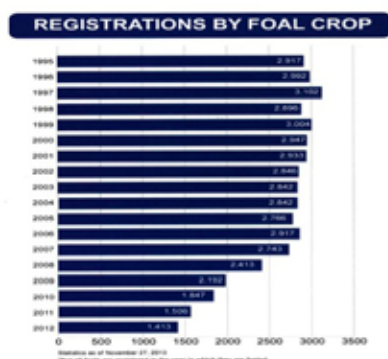
*The following article is based on the findings of Jim and Jenny Taylor, along with Todd Graham for their presentation on Friday, January 17, 2014 at the United Professional Horsemen's Association Convention. The presentation was directed toward Morgan and American Saddlebred trainers as both breeds show a very similar decline in foal registrations.*

For years the American Saddlebred industry has been aware of the declining numbers of foal registrations, and lately the decline in registrations has been evident in the young horse classes at every show in the nation. Even at the 2013 Kentucky State Fair World's Championship Horse Show, where in the 28 classes offered for two-year-olds, three-year-olds, and four-year-olds there were not enough entries to claim the available ribbons.

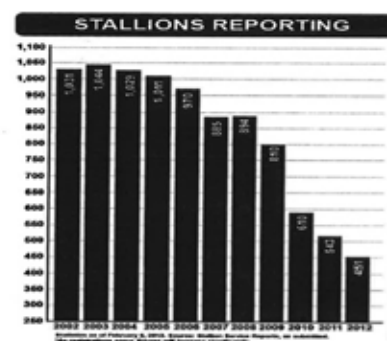
Performance classes at the Kentucky State Fair for Junior Exhibitors, Amateurs, Ladies, and Open horses five-years-old and over were large with 501 ribbon winners. However, 219 horses, or 40% of those ribbon winners were actually aged 10 years or older.

A study of the number of entries from eight of the nation's top horse shows, Asheville Lions Club, Kentucky State Fair, Lexington Junior League, Mid-America Mane Event, Midwest Charity, River Ridge Charity, UPHA/American Royal, and UPHA Chapter 5, revealed a 35% drop in the three-year-old divisions in the last 10 years. From these same horse shows in 2013, 45% of the horses were aged 10 or older. This 45% of horses will soon need to be replaced, as they could be nearing retirement or an alternate career.

There has been an alarming drop in registrations of American Saddlebred foals in the last few years. Specifically, from 2006 through 2012, where there has been a 52% drop in the foal crop.



In the same time frame there has also been an alarming drop in the number of breeding stallions. From 2006 through 2012 the number of Stallion Service Reports received by the American Saddlebred Registry has dropped 47%.



From these findings Jim and Jenny Taylor, along with Todd Graham have made four sobering assumptions that could predict the future of the American Saddlebred horse and the livelihood of the breed's professionals.

Assumption 1:

Though all trends show that registrations will continue to drop, let's assume they remain at 1500 per year for the next 10 years, making a total of 15,000 foals registered over that time frame.

Assumption 2:

40% of foals registered make "career" show horses, making a total of 6000 "show horses" born over that 10 years. There will only be 600 new show horses per year. There are currently an estimated 600 professional (Active) UPHA Members that train American Saddlebred horses. Therefore, if all UPHA trainers divided each year's colts equally, they would get one colt per year in training. However, if one trainer received five colts, four trainers will receive ZERO.

Assumption 3:

The average American Saddlebred show horse will remain in training for 10 years. Most horses currently in training will be phased out for a number of reasons over the next 10 years.

Assumption 4:

If these three assumptions are realized, in 11 years each of the 600 UPHA trainers will have only 10 horses in training. If 300 of the UPHA trainers each have 20 horses in training, the remaining 300 will need to seek a new career!!!

The future of our great show horses, and the future of everyone who has chosen them as their livelihood, is at stake.

UPHA Past President Jim Taylor would like to remind all involved in the American Saddlebred, Morgan, and Hackney show horse industries that the UPHA has always had an open door policy with all the breed organizations. Jim, Jenny, and Todd are asking each and every member of UPHA to extend an open arm and embrace this issue and work with their respective breed organizations to find some positive solutions to this very serious problem.