



Seats went quickly at the American Equestrian Trade Association's organizational meeting Aug. 14 in Atlantic City.

AETA Meets at Stanley Market

The Stanley Atlantic City Market wrapped up Aug. 14, and many vendors, retailers and others went home with a lot to think about regarding the future of trade shows and the equine trade industry in the United States. This market was much smaller in scale and attendance than the February Stanley Market. Despite the numbers, many vendors reported doing well.

Most noticeable were the scaled down sizes of the booths. Companies such as JPC, Thornhill, GT Reid and others, who traditionally have been anchors at the Stanley Markets, had single or double booths only. Nearly everyone agreed that the staging and logistics of the trade show had improved over February, the first Stanley market in the Atlantic City venue.

Sunday night, Aug. 13, a standing-room-only crowd gathered at the convention center to hear about plans to create the American Equestrian Trade Association (AETA), with an eye toward beginning the process of bringing the trade show aspect of the equine trade industry back into perspective.

The idea for AETA was birthed earlier this year at a meeting in New England of 25 English suppliers. In the interim, an executive director has been named and a Web site has been created. Sunday evening's meeting was hosted by Tom McGuinness, owner of Horseware Ireland. McGuinness has been the leading voice behind this project since its inception.

The group unveiled a survey of retailer most likely to attend a trade show, conducted with the help of Tack 'n Togs Magazine. Retailers overwhelmingly wanted to see two trade shows a year, liked the January-February, August-September timing and ranked proximity of lodging to the show venue as their top concern. Others in order of popularity

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