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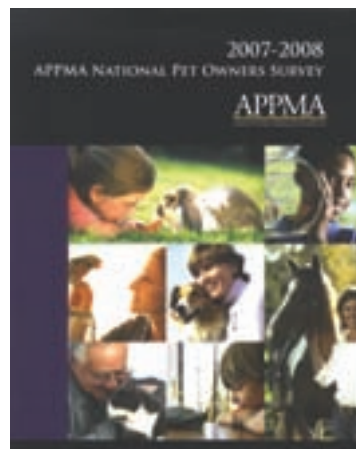
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APPMA Study Outlines Equine Trends

The total number of households that own horses is up (4.3 million). Horses are a family affair (most have young children at home). The average cost to purchase a horse is higher than you might expect (about \$7,000).

Those are just a few of the conclusions reached in the 2007-2008 APPMA National Pet Owners Survey. Working through a research consultant, the association mailed out nearly 400 questionnaires to horse enthusiasts. About 40 percent responded.

A partial list of the subjects in the survey are: equine ownership, services and products used, feed and benefits



and drawbacks of horse ownership.

Based in Greenwich, Conn., the association was founded in 1958 and today includes nearly a thousand pet product manufacturers in its membership, many of them from the equine industry. Each year, it hosts the Global Pet Expo, the largest pet

products trade show in the world.

The complete survey, which also includes sections on dogs, cats, fish, birds, small animals and reptiles, was made available free to members. The 550-page document can be purchased by nonmembers. Visit the association's Web site, www.appma.org, for details.

Survey at a Glance

- Four percent of households in the United States own horses, mostly concentrated in the Mountain and Pacific regions of the country.
- Horse owners represent a higher household income compared with other pet owners and the remainder of the population. Respondents owned an average of three horses.
- Horse owners surveyed called a vet an average of 2.6 times in a 12-month period. Owners who board had slightly more vet calls than those who keep their horses at home. The most common services were vaccinations, Coggins test, dental care and wellness exams. About a fourth utilized a vet for deworming.
- The most common form of supplement given to horses is in pellet form, followed by granule and then powder. About half the horses represented receive a supplement.
- Hay is the most common food purchased for horses.
- Nearly half of the owners surveyed reported having clippers for their horse for grooming use. Owners with a higher household annual income buy a greater variety of grooming tools. Brushes are the most commonly purchased grooming tool.
- Feed stores were the preferred vendor for the survey participants, followed by tack shops. About a quarter reported buying online on occasion.
- The greatest expense among horse owners surveyed was trainers (\$348 annually). Vet and farrier costs ranked second and third. About half reported buying horse treats.
- The biggest drawback of owning horses was "sadness when they die," checked by 48 percent of the survey's sample. Finding care for horses while traveling and daily responsibilities were also mentioned.
- Twenty percent of horse owners purchase a Christmas gift for their horse, spending an average of \$12.