HORSE FACT SHEET
By Reuben Albaugh*

HORSE IDENTIFICATION

Since horse rustling is on the increase, owners would be interested in where they could have their horse identified by freeze branding. The following are the names and addresses where this identification can be performed.

Bob and Amy Armstrong
10101 Nunn St. SW
Olympia, WA. 08502

Bill Harlan
715 Denmark
Sonoma, CA. 95476
(707) 938-4241

Nancy Killian
2854 Kensington Way
Rex, GA. 30273
(404) 968-8452

Kit Van Niman
28 1/2 Waterman
Coldwater, MI 49036
(517) 278-8989

Judy and Phil Wilkinson
Rt. 2, Box 801
Klamath Falls, Ore. 97601
(503) 884-5971

When a horse is freeze branded by any of these qualified branders, the owner is supplied with a plastic card describing the horses color and markings, identifying characteristics, and the freeze brand number.

In the case of theft, this information can be plugged into a national crime information center-police computer network for investigation. It's up to the owner to notify their local law enforcement agencies immediately after they know their horse has been stolen.

Mr. O. W. Hooton, Chief, Bureau of Livestock Identification, California Department of Food and Agriculture adds the following:

"A freeze brand denoting ownership may be used on horses only. To be legal, this brand must be recorded with the Bureau of Livestock Identification."

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"A freeze brand may be applied to the neck of a horse as a record brand only and may not be recorded."

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HORSE STATISTICS

During the past 10 years, horses in the United States have increased by 32%. The numbers now are estimated to be between eight and ten million head. During this same time, horse owners have increased by 47%. It is estimated that 75 - 80% of the total horse numbers of the United States are used for recreation and are located in urban and suburban environment.

With shorter working hours and more time for leisure, coupled with the desire for physical fitness, these numbers are bound to increase in the next decade.

This great increase movement of interest in the equine is now attracting the interest of government, the business world, and the public in general as to the importance of the economic impact that the horse industry is now enjoying.

According to the American Horse Council, over four million people own horses, and they spend about fifteen billion dollars per year to feed and care for them. Many more people are involved with horses. For example, 112 million viewed equestrian sports in 1980. This is more than attended football and baseball combined proving once again the great attraction that man has for horses.

During 1980, 75 million people attended horse racing on 185 race tracks in America. Through the pari-mutuel betting program, state governments received 1/2 billion dollars in tax revenue from this racing program.
In 1980, 36,750 horse shows were conducted in the United States. 71,506 days were devoted to this sport. Over 6 million horses were involved in these horse shows and 245 million people attended. 5,844,755 people exhibited horses at these shows, and the revenue from horse shows in 1980 amounted to $317,675,000.

All of these statistics are rather dry reading. However, the data presented here emphasizes the importance and magnitude of the horse industry in the United States.