

## The European Horse Network - First meeting

*The European Horse Network (EHN) has now had its first meeting on January 21 in Brussels. Participants were representatives from 11 equine organizations. On the agenda was the network's organization and future functioning along with on how to strengthen the equine industry's position in Europe. This year's goal is an information session about the Horse industry for politicians in Brussels in October.*

- "It was a good meeting with many positive side effects such as individual meetings between the various organization, networking and establishing of new contacts", said the Swedish chairman of the network, Stefan Johanson.

EHN was formed on a Swedish initiative at the European conference EU Equus 2009. It currently consists of:

- **BHS** - British Horse Society
- **EFTBA** - European Federation Thoroughbred Breeders - Breeders
- **EPMA** - European Pari Mutuel Association
- **FEI** - International Equestrian Federation
- **FEIF** - International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations
- **HNS** - Swedish Horse Council Foundation
- **IFHA** - International Federation Horseracing Authorities
- **KMET** - Central Europe Racing Federation
- **Pole-Filiere Equine** - (Normandie) representing the Network of European Equestrian Regions
- **UET** - European Trotting Union
- **WBFSH** - World federation of Sport horses Breeders

At the meeting it was established that these organizations, who are founders of the network, also represents the active members and will meet at least four times per year.

The network is open to all equine organizations that may join as members. These members will not participate in the meetings but will obtain all information and participate in the public activities. The associate members will also have a possibility to influence the work of the EHN.

An annual fee of Euro 500 will be paid by *all* members. It is also agreed that the various activities of the network to be implemented will be project funded.

The key issues for the network include for example:

- animal welfare and exotic virus diseases
- breeding and husbandry
- transport and identification
- rural development and environmental impact
- education, research and development
- funding of the horse industry
- VAT and taxes

It is established that the European Horse Network will organize a conference in autumn 2010 in Brussels. The target participants can be members of parliament, as well as other politicians and officials.

This conference main task is to state the economic importance of the Horse industry within the EU, together with the social opportunities that the industry creates and makes available to the society.

The next EU Equus conference is preliminary scheduled to be held during the first half of 2013 in Ireland, during the country's EU presidency.

The next EHN meeting will be held in Brussels on 15 April.

*8 February 2010*