

Colorado Unwanted Horse Alliance  
Gelding Survey Summary Results  
January, 2012

The Colorado Unwanted Horse Alliance is a not-for-profit organization founded in 2008 to reduce the number of Colorado's unwanted horses and to promote public and private collaboration and education concerning their welfare, ownership, and disposition.

Research to provide better information about factors in the unwanted horse issue helps CUHA direct its resources for greatest impact. The research published on the CUHA website to date has provided an environmental assessment of the problem and attitudes toward euthanasia.

A survey on attitudes and perceptions toward gelding was developed and administered in the fall of 2011. The intention was to identify attitudes toward gelding and opinions on which solutions might work best.

Questions were asked about:

- subsidized gelding programs
- horse owner education programs
- feed assistance programs
- support for local horse rescue adoptions.

A link to the survey was sent via email to stakeholder groups including the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association members, CSU Extension Agents, Colorado Livestock inspectors, and Animal Care and Control officers. Results of the survey included 190 complete responses with veterinarians, other veterinary medical personnel and veterinary students representing more than half of the respondents.

Approximately two-thirds of respondents think:

- the number of unwanted horses in their community is increasing with the poor economy being the primary contributing factor
- that members of their community are only somewhat aware of the unwanted horse issue.

It was thought that the majority of stallions in their area were already being gelded.

One half of respondents indicated that stallions were not gelded because:

- the owner intended to breed them (note: is this less than 1/2?)

- of the cost
- the owner didn't understand the benefits
- the owner had a cultural perception that was negative
- veterinarians were not readily accessible.

This indicates to CUHA that even though most stallions are gelded some communities could benefit from education and a subsidized gelding program.

The respondents ranked the value of programs as:

1<sup>st</sup> - educational programs about responsible horse ownership

2<sup>d</sup> - facilitated adoption and feed assistance

3<sup>rd</sup> - subsidized gelding and training programs

Communication through veterinarians was identified as the preferred method for getting out information.

Approximately 60% of respondents reported that there is a horse rescue in their community, but 70% of respondents do not collaborate with a rescue. This indicates an area where CUHA can facilitate collaborative efforts.

The next steps for CUHA are to incorporate the results of this survey into assessing its grant program and program development.

The hope is that by gathering information such as this we can better support communities to address issues of unwanted horses.

To find out more and to donate, visit [www.counwantedhorse.org](http://www.counwantedhorse.org). You may also donate to the Unwanted Horse Fund on your Colorado state tax return.