

XX May 2006

Dear XXXXX

Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales

I hope that by now you will have received your copy of the British Horse Industry Confederation Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales. If you have not, please find details of how to obtain one at the end of this letter.

You will have noted from reading Aim 8 that two of the main issues inhibiting the British horse industry from developing in line with its international counterparts are the fragmented nature of the industry and the lack of a national equine database. The latter is now well underway and the former will hopefully be addressed by the implementation of the relevant sections of the Strategy itself.

In the British Horse Industry Confederation's recent Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales, Aim 8 calls for Lead Bodies "to assist in the improvement of our horses and ponies" and I have been nominated to lead this in the first instance in order to set the ball rolling. As a consequence some representatives of a cross section of breed societies were invited to meet and brain storm on the way forward. The following suggestions emerged from that meeting:

1. In response to the question as to which Lead Bodies may best represent the needs of the different industry sectors, the following were suggested:

- Sport horses and ponies (The British Equestrian Federation's *British Breeding*)
- Recreational horses and ponies (British Horse Society)
- Native and indigenous horses and ponies (British Horse Society)
- Racing thoroughbreds (Thoroughbred Breeders' Association)

The consensus seems to be that the organisations listed above in brackets may be best placed to form the required Lead Bodies with whom studbooks may engage to represent their needs.

2. In the initial stages of implementation, and for studbooks to determine where their organisations sit (and they may sit in more than one), the following outline definitions were suggested:

- Sport horses and ponies – participating in FEI disciplines at any affiliated level
- Recreational horses and ponies – horses and ponies kept for pleasure

- Native and indigenous horses and ponies – horses and ponies native to the British Isles and/or indigenous to any location in the UK and all rare breeds
- Racing thoroughbreds – Thoroughbred horses which are recorded in a Thoroughbred Stud Book approved by the International Stud Book Committee at the time of their official recording

For the purposes of simplicity, studbooks are as defined in European Commission Decision 92/353/EEC, with the additional limitation that they must be eligible to provide verified breeding data to NED..

This initiative is a major step in improving collaboration between British studbooks with a view to improving the recognition of British bred horses and ponies on the worldwide stage and we hope that we can count upon your support. I should expand here on what I and my colleagues in the British Equestrian Federation mean in using the word “collaboration”. Literally of course it means that we should “work together”. All of the 13 members of the British Equestrian Federation, including the BHS, are independent organisations enjoying their own sovereignty but who work together where all parties think it makes sense to do so. Here the proposal is that the BEF and the studbooks work together, without any ties, when it suits us to do so for the common good and vitally for the future of British bred horses.

In the first instance I would be grateful if you would respond to me by 30 June with your thoughts on and support of the Lead Bodies described in 1 as well as your views on the draft definitions of the different groups of equestrian activity given in 2.

In addition, if you are able, please supply any items you may like to see on the agenda of a first meeting together with an indication that, dates permitting, you will be able to attend.

Thank you for your consideration and I hope to hear from you soon. Please address your responses to Jan Rogers, Head of Equine Development and Breeding at the BEF office. Should you wish to speak to her or e-mail her directly her contact details are Tel: 07725 332595 and E-mail: janrogersequine@aol.com .

Yours sincerely

Andrew Finding
Chief Executive
British Equestrian Federation

Copies of the Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales are available from www.bhic.co.uk or BHIC, c/o British Horseracing Board, 151 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8AL.