‘Reaching New Heights’
Report of Irish Sport Horse Industry Strategy Committee

Prof. Cathal O’Donoghue
Head, Teagasc Rural Economy and Development Programme
Chair, Working Group, Irish Sport Horse Industry Strategy
Background

- Horse Sport Ireland – UCD report
  - Large sector making money for economy
  - Largely making other people money rather than the breeders in the sector,
  - Export sales low for the size of the sector.

- Challenges
  - Breeding Metrics (Show Jumping)
  - Oversupply
Commitment to Developing a Strategy
Strategy Objective

- Increase export value and to
- Increase the incomes of those who work across the Sport Horse supply chain
Stages in the process

- Context and historical issues of where we are today
- Expert consultations
- Written submissions
- Draw lessons from other countries and sectors
- Consult in a series of regional meetings with participation by Minister Coveney
- Deliver report to Minister Coveney on 19th of December.
- Implementation!
‘Reaching New Heights’
List of Recommendations
R1 IMPROVING HERD QUALITY: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

R 1.1 Aim to be in the top division of the WBFSH Studbook Rankings for Show jumping within fifteen years and on a par with studbooks such as BWP, KWPN, HOLST and SF; and furthermore to maintain our position at the top of the WBFSH Eventing Studbook Rankings;
R1 IMPROVING HERD QUALITY: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

- R1.2: Develop individual breeding strategies to produce both show jumping and eventing horses, which are internationally benchmarked and establish a development programme for the traditionally bred horse;
R1 IMPROVING HERD QUALITY: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

- R1.3: A radical rebuilding of existing breeding infrastructure to have a world leading scientific programme to breed for the market is required with a significant improvement in export performance and profit;
R1 IMPROVING HERD QUALITY: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

- R1.4: Profile and benchmark the mare herd;
R1 IMPROVING HERD QUALITY: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

- R1.5; Breeding organisations should be required to ensure that their breeding programmes are appropriate to the market place
R1 IMPROVING HERD QUALITY: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

R1.6: A highly selective colt retention scheme based on genetics, phenotype and performance should be introduced with criteria benchmarked against that in competitor studbooks such as KWPN, SF, HOLST and BWP;
R1 IMPROVING HERD QUALITY: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

R1.7: ‘Irish Bred Restrictions’ at the Dublin Horse Show should be reviewed by the Royal Dublin Society
R1 IMPROVING HERD QUALITY: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

- R1.8: Develop a breeding plan, infrastructure and knowledge transfer in relation to ponies;
R1: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

- R1.9: Increase the number of horses registered with verified pedigree, facilitated by an incentivised registration fee structure for breeders;
R1: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

- R1.10: Provide improved information, training and access to technologies such as artificial insemination, embryo transfer and advanced reproductive technologies coupled with access to artificial insemination technicians for equines.
R1: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

- R1.11: Improve the transparency and recording of sales price information for horses sold in Ireland and overseas;
R1: IMPROVE BREEDING STRUCTURES TO ALLOW IRELAND PRODUCE HORSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED IN THE TOP OF THE WBFSH RANKINGS

➢ R1.12: Increase the usage of cost and profit management.
R2: DELIVER AN EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRUCTURE TO DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

- R2.1: Establish Equine Technology Adoption Programme (ETAP) along the lines of existing successful Dairy Beef and Sheep Discussion Groups
R2: DELIVER AN EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRUCTURE TO DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

- R2.2: Develop a single progressive accredited education system - a National Equestrian Education Pathway (NEEP) – a single system for breeders, riders and those involved in equestrian industry under the Department of Education;
R2: DELIVER AN EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRUCTURE TO DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

R2.3: Provide a tailored mating information service for different breeding directions to assist breeders in making decisions;
R2: DELIVER AN EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRUCTURE TO DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

- R2.4: Certify horse and pony riders and producers (breaking and competition);
R2: DELIVER AN EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRUCTURE TO DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

- R2.5: Create an information hub for all industry participants
R3: IMPROVE THE SALES CAPACITY ACROSS THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY

➢ R3.1: Develop an Irish Sport Horse marketing division within Horse Sport Ireland;
R3: IMPROVE THE SALES CAPACITY ACROSS THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY

- R3.2: Invest in greater prize money to provide more of an incentive across the industry;
- R3.3: Develop mare and stallion competition classes, incentivised by prize money, to *attract mares and stallions to competition*;
R3: IMPROVE THE SALES CAPACITY ACROSS THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY

- R3.4: Re-evaluate the current competition structure and scheduling of young horse and pony competitions (three to six year olds) with greater emphasis on equitation and on the appropriate development of young horses
R3: IMPROVE THE SALES CAPACITY ACROSS THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY

- R3.5: To aid consumer decision-making ‘Star Rate’ equestrian centres and livery yards in relation to their quality of husbandry, facilities, horses, instruction (where applicable) and other services provided by an independent body;
R3: IMPROVE THE SALES CAPACITY ACROSS THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY

- R3.6: A range of equine tourism and recreationally focused initiatives should be fostered to promote increased participation across the sector supported by an improved multi-agency, all-island approach;
R3: IMPROVE THE SALES CAPACITY ACROSS THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY

- R3.7: Work with national and local enterprise structures to maximise employment within the sector.
R4: INCREASE PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE SECTOR

- R4.1: Promote participation by instituting a single registration fee, or a discounted bundle package, for participation across all affiliate bodies of HSI;

REGISTER NOW
R4: INCREASE PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE SECTOR

- R4.2: Improve the structure of education for young riders and producers;
R4: INCREASE PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE SECTOR

R4.3: Create opportunities for the exposure of primary and secondary school children with the sport horse industry;
R4: INCREASE PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE SECTOR

- R4.4: The current young breeders programme should be expanded and further developed to enable FETAC accreditation by participants.
R5: DEVELOP AND ENHANCE THE STRUCTURES TO IMPROVE WELFARE OF HORSES

- R5.1: We support efforts by DAFM to improve the welfare of horses in Ireland and support responsible ownership;

- R5.2: Engage an all-island approach to welfare, registration and related disease control matters such as premises registration and also change of ownership;
R5: DEVELOP AND ENHANCE THE STRUCTURES TO IMPROVE WELFARE OF HORSES

- R5.3: Consideration should be given to reviewing the EU legislation regarding horses stamped out of the food chain whilst maintaining the same level of consumer protection;

- R5.4: Develop a subsidised national programme to castrate male horses and ponies for those on Social Welfare or Farm Assist;
R5: DEVELOP AND ENHANCE THE STRUCTURES TO IMPROVE WELFARE OF HORSES

R5.5: No public funds should be channelled into breeding grants or subsidies unless they are linked to quality improvement as they principally serve to distort breeding;
R5: DEVELOP AND ENHANCE THE STRUCTURES TO IMPROVE WELFARE OF HORSES

R5.6: Initiatives to assist those with horses in an urban environment and those keeping horses in inappropriate settings to avoid adverse welfare and ensure compliance with the law should be developed.
R6: DEEPEN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

R6.1: In order to ensure that the industry is organised in the most effective manner to achieve the objectives set out in this Plan and to assist in the efficient administration of the initiatives set out in this Plan, it is recommended that a Government-sponsored, independent review is undertaken of the structure of HSI and where relevant, other organisations, to fulfil the ambitions set out in this plan.
R6: DEEPEN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

- R6.2: Develop a ‘Network of Excellence’ to facilitate the development of the equine sector;
R6: DEEPEN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

- R6.3: Invest in development of equine facilities across the industry;
R6: DEEPEN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

- R6.4: Develop and continue the role of the Army Equitation School in its remit to advertise the Irish bred horse by competition at the highest level and an increased interaction with the sport horse industry.

- The development of an advisory educational and training link in conjunction with the National Sports Campus and the relevant Higher Educational Institutions as part of a ‘Centre of Excellence’ should be explored.
R6: DEEPEN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

- R6.5: Establish Producer groups for Breeders and Producers, with the aim of collectively providing a number of key services including marketing and market research, bulk buying of feed and other inputs, financial planning and elite auctions;
R6: DEEPEN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

- R6.6: The introduction of a foal levy and competition levy would assist the industry generate its own funds;
R6: DEEPEN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ON THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

R6.7: Develop a Research and Development Programme under the auspices of the DAFM Research Stimulus Programme
Additional funding available for:

- Discussion Groups
- Marketing Initiative
Thank You