



August 20, 2014

Mr. Bruce Wagner  
Center Director  
National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS)  
USDA/APHIS  
2150 Centre Ave, Building B, Mail Stop 2E7  
Fort Collins, CO 80526-8117

**Re:       Docket No. APHIS-2014-0044  
          Notice of Request for Reinstatement of an Information  
          Collection; National Animal Health Monitoring System;  
          Equine 2015 Study**

Dear Mr. Wagner:

The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's reinstatement of the National Animal Health Monitoring System: Equine 2015 Study.

The AAEP thanks USDA-APHIS for the actions it takes to protect the health and well-being of the United States equine industry and fully supports the efforts to conduct a NAHMS Equine Study in 2015. The previous NAHMS studies conducted by the department have been very useful for the industry and its many stakeholders, and a new study will again be just as beneficial for the equine industry in the U.S.

#### **AAEP**

The AAEP, headquartered in Lexington, Ky., was founded in 1954 as a non-profit organization dedicated to the health and welfare of the horse. Currently, the AAEP reaches more than 5 million horse owners through its over 9,000 members worldwide and is actively involved in ethics issues, practice management, research and continuing education in the equine veterinary profession and horse industry.

## **Background & Conclusion**

The equine industry represents a storied history in the United States and has a significant economic impact on this country.

We earnestly look forward to the results of the 2015 NAHMS Equine Study. This study will assist the industry, the veterinary profession and stakeholders, in identifying current infectious disease control practices, such as biosecurity, vaccination, and equine identification and traceability. Furthermore, information identified in this study regarding equine care and welfare management-issues is certain to be of tremendous benefit to the equine industry. Moreover, economics of horse ownership continue to be of the utmost importance to the industry. The information derived from this study will assist the industry in its analysis of horse ownership across the U.S.

It also will be of value to have data collected regarding diverse body-systems including; respiratory, neurologic, and digestive disorders, among others. Data obtained regarding infectious diseases such as Equine herpesvirus (EHV), Equine piroplasmiasis, and Contagious Equine Metritis, for example, in addition to others that will be included in the study, will yield information relevant to the horse industry.

In addition, the AAEP appreciates outreach by the department in allowing us to provide input on the development of this study through its needs assessment survey.

Thank you for allowing us to submit these comments. If you have any further questions or would like to meet to discuss these comments, please contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Blea, DVM". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" being the most prominent.

Jeff Blea, DVM  
AAEP President – 2014

AAEP  
4075 Iron Works Parkway  
Lexington, KY 40511