

EUnetHorse

HOW TO IMPROVE THE
PERFORMANCE AND RESILIENCE
OF EQUINE FARMS IN EUROPE?

RESULTS of the EUnetHorse EUROPEAN PROJECT
PHASE 1: IDENTIFICATION of NEEDS in BELGIUM

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WHO ARE THE DUTCH FARMERS INTERVIEWED?

In Belgium, 40 equine farmers were interviewed.

LOCATION

- 5 of the farms surveyed are close to a major city
- 1 are close to suburbs
- 10 are in rural areas, of which 15 are close to a village and 9 are isolated
- 23 % are in sensitive areas



FARM SIZE

- Utilised agricultural area from 1,5 to 80 ha, average 85 % of it is composed of permanent meadows
- From 3 to 120 horses per farm, the median is 23, average is 35,5
- From 0,3 t of 20 births per year on farms, median is 2, average is 4,03



FARM WORKERS

- There is an average of 3 employees per farm
- 59% are woman



ECONOMIC AND PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

- For 52% of farms, this is their main activity
- Economic objectives: 65 % aim to achieve economical balance, 32 % aim to make a profit, 3 % have no economic objectives
- Economic performance (including salaries): 40 % are in deficit, 30 % break even, 27% make a profit



WHAT NEEDS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AND PRIORITIZED TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE AND RESILIENCE IN BELGIUM?

In Belgium, more than 90 needs were identified through interviews and the national workshop. Here are the ones shared with the European partners during the first European Workshop:

ANIMAL WELFARE AND HEALTH ON FARMS

- Improve the knowledge of animals
- Set put standards and controls for wellbeing
- Need for scientific evidence linking performance and wellbeing
- Improve the health knowledge (specifically resistance to ivermectin)
- Guarantee the health and welfare of horses on limited surfaces

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF FARMS

- Improve resilience in the face of climate change
- Decrease biodiversity loss
- Improve pastures management
- Reduce waste of ressources
- Improve management of common spaces (communal lands and communal paths)

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND RESILIENCE OF FARMS

- Clarify status of equine farmers: Horse farmers have a hard time gaining recognition in Belgium. Most of them are company directors and are not considered to be farmers.
- Improve transmission of information and training
- Decrease the weight of regulation and administration
- Improve access to the land
- Improve the organization of the sector
- Improve the organization of the sector

MORE INFO

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