

Media Release

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Global Trend plus Aussie Dollar Feeding Export Demand

The growth in the global recreation and pleasure market - of which horse riding is just one part - plus the value of the Australian dollar abroad, is boosting international interest in the Australian Stock Horse.

This market is seeking a horse in the \$5,000-25,000 range. The exchange rate makes the Australian breed very reasonably priced, compared to say, the domestic market in USA.

Australian Stock Horse Society (ASHS) chief, Mr Steve Guihot commented, "The other area of growth is global demand for horses for professional equine sportsman, who is seeking high level performance horses at the \$50,000 mark. This includes professional western pleasure riders as well as Olympic disciplines. "

Mr Guihot said the Society had received strong interest from North America and from China, prompting it to organise trade missions to both markets this spring. Ahead of these missions the Society has recently launched www.ashs.com.au/export which includes translations into French for the Canadian market and another suitable for China.

Canada: 7-11 September 2005

This is essentially a breeder mission, with a party of six producers participating. The Canadian market is mature, and there exists an understanding of the versatility of the Australian Stock Horse. The interest in the Society is for breeding Polocrosse horses which has enjoyed a spike in interest created by the sport's World Cups in 2003 and in 2007. There is also good interest in breeding cattle horses as well as for pleasure riding. ASHS will be at Spruce Meadows Equi-Fair (Exhibit Stall B213).

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/2...

22 August 2005



China: 16-18 September 2005

This mission forms part of the Austrade Expo and the Society will be represented by its heads of export and marketing. The Society has been invited to attend due to links formed during its visit to China last year and a reciprocal visit to Australia this year.

China represents quite a different prospect in that it is an emerging market where recreational riding is growing with the country's increasing affluence. Interest therefore is likely to be in the development of training and skills, such as horse handling, stable management and horse husbandry. There is also interest in Australian Stock Horses for use solely for pleasure riding market as there is growth in riding clubs in new middle class housing developments.

Since the Society's export campaign began late last year when it undertook its debut trade mission to China, prompted by interest ahead of the Beijing Olympics. The next push being into Canada is in direct response to significant interest from North America which currently imports in excess of 30,000 horses annually¹. Both China and North America are searching for new breeds to service the boom in recreational and sports riding.

The Australian Stock Horse, which featured in the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympics, has a rich history. The Australian Stock Horse (ASH) developed from bloodstock transported to the colony on the first fleet in 1788. Subsequent selective breeding created one horse which displays versatility and superb temperament and is suited to work, rest and play.

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EDITOR'S NOTES:

1. Established in 1971, the Australian Stock Horse Society is based in Scone, New South Wales.
2. With more than 9500 Members and over registered 150,000 horses, the Society is Australia's largest organisation of recreation/work horses.
3. Its mission is to maintain the heritage and to promote the bloodlines and high-performance of the Australian Stock Horse among equestrian activities and the public.
4. **For more see www.ashs.com.au/export**

¹ Source: "Equine Industry Export market Opportunities study 2003 Equine Canada