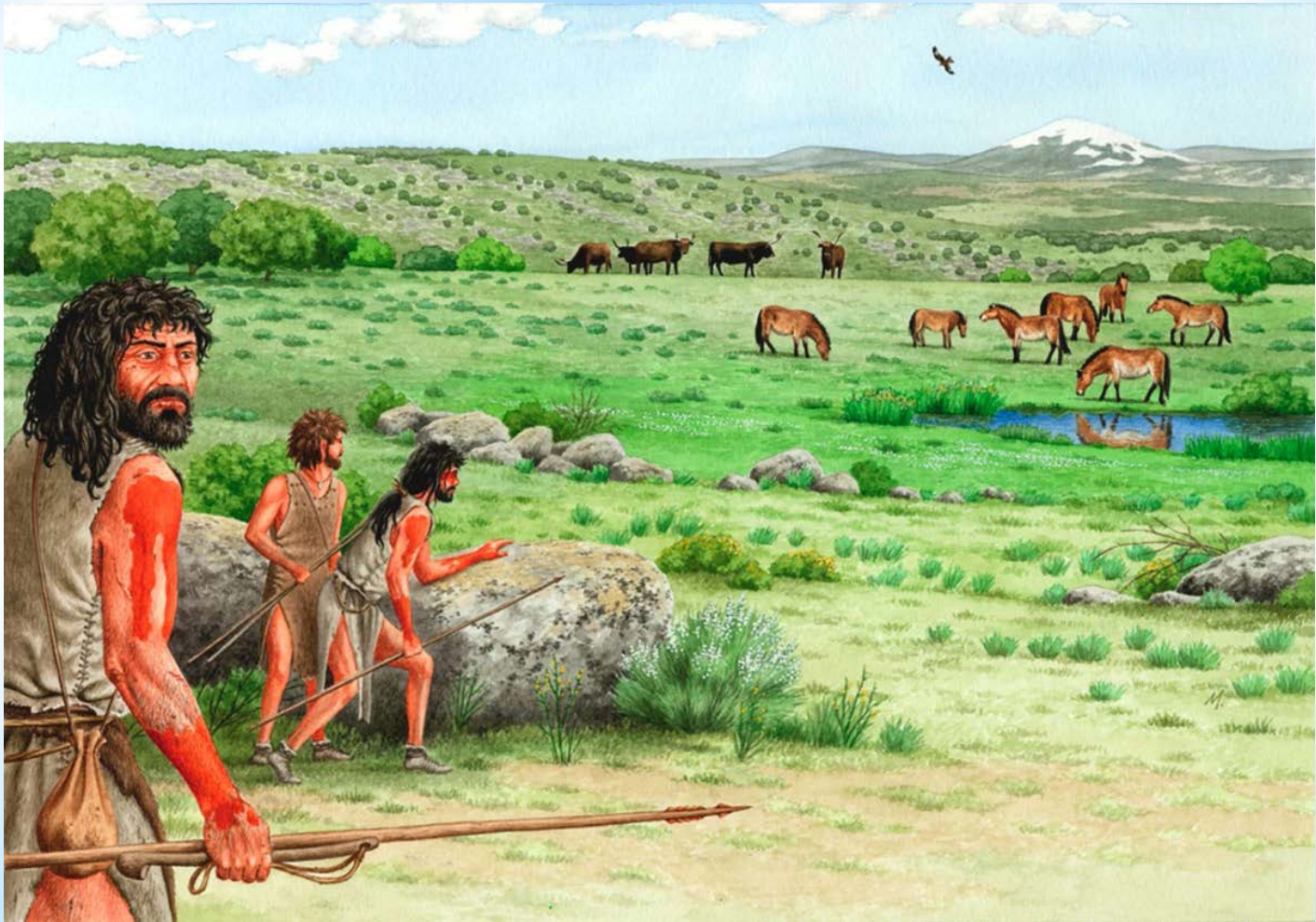


The Unwanted Horse



Marion Anderson DVM, MSc
President, Alberta SPCA



Hunting for Food



That First Ride



Transportation

Beasts of Burden





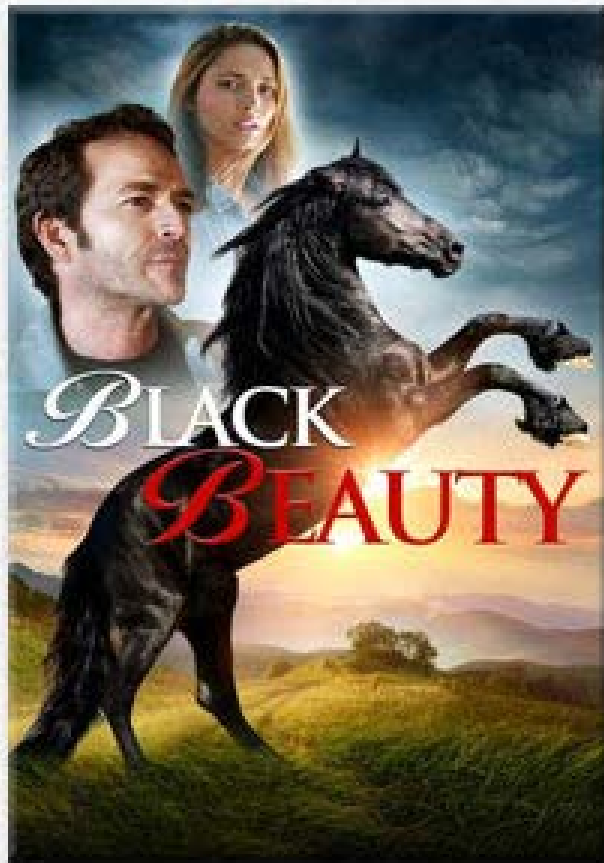
War Horses

Recreation





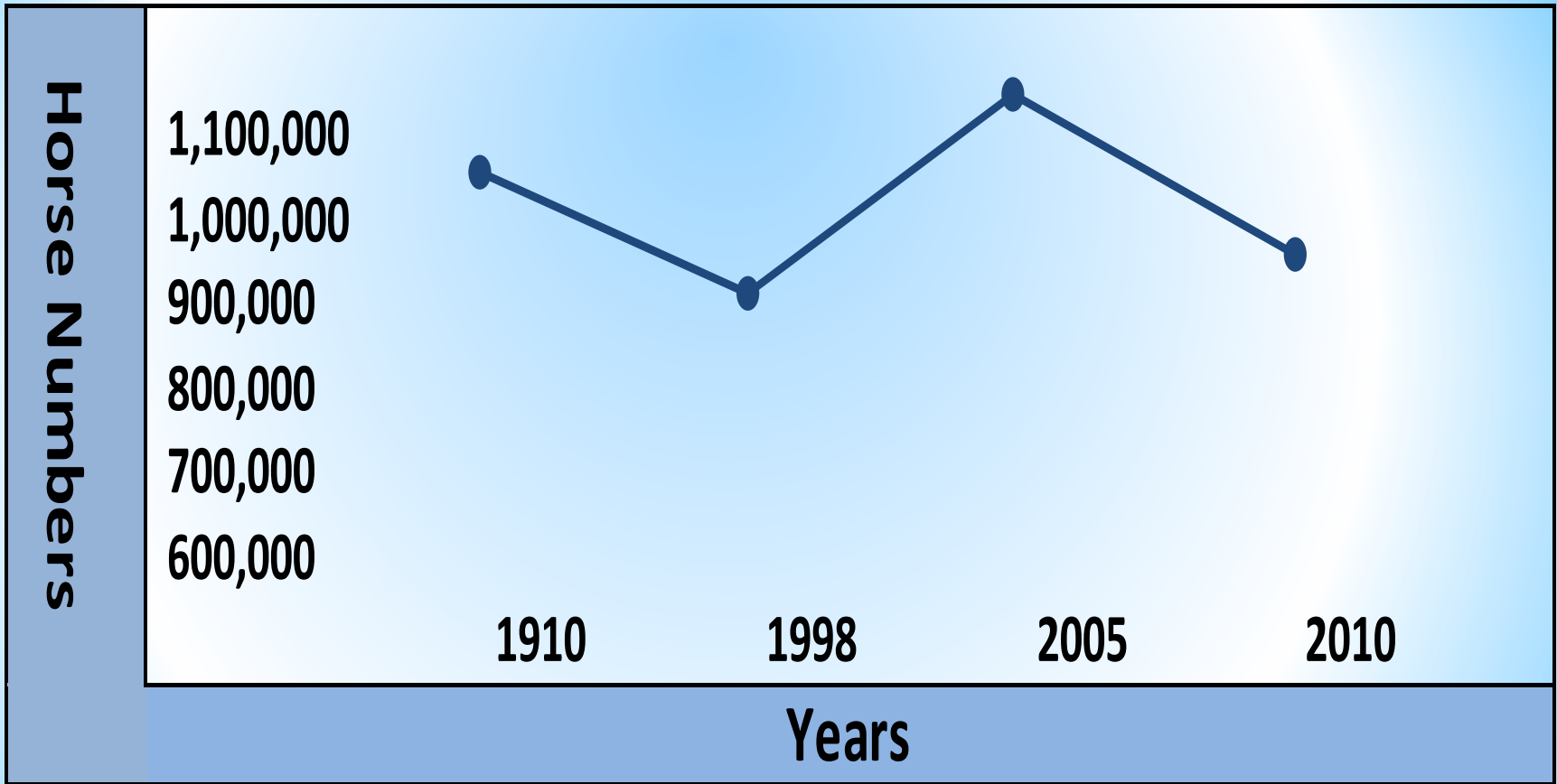
Riding for Recreation



The Thrill of Watching Horses

Fluctuating Horse Numbers

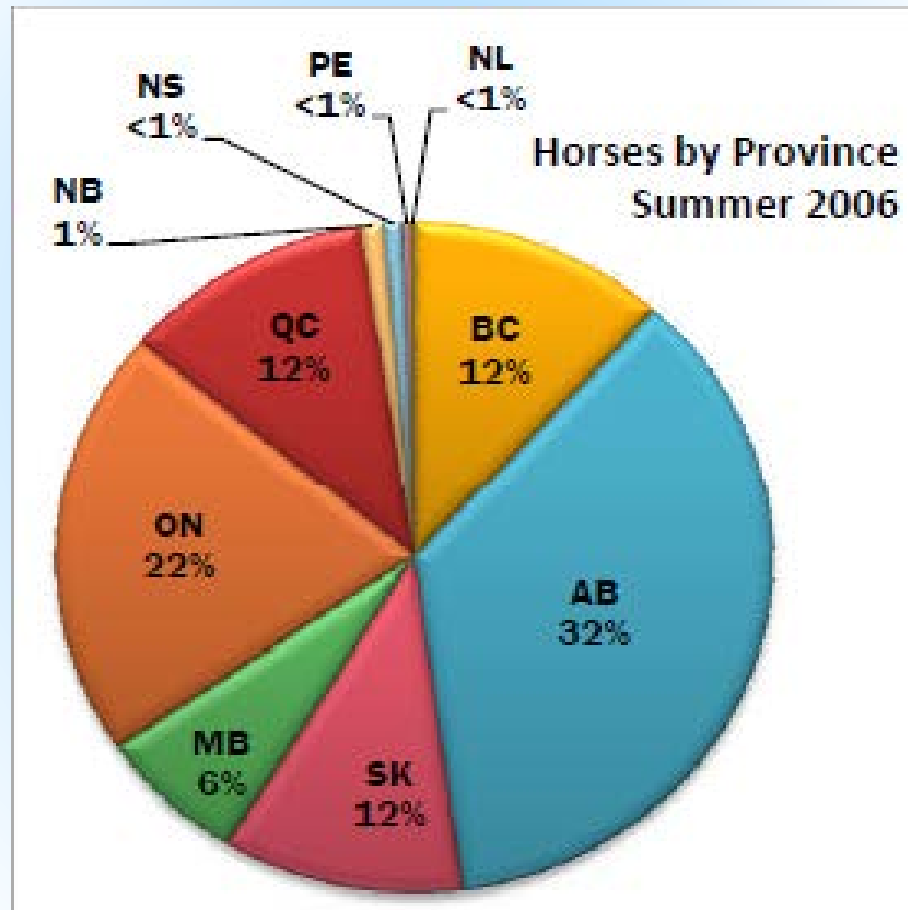
- One hundred years ago horse numbers in Canada were estimated to be about 1 million head
- By 1998 they had dropped to 886,5000
- The numbers rose again to the highest ever estimated number of 1,092,461 in 2005
- By 2010 that number had dropped again to 963,500



Horse Numbers in the Last Century



Bonanza



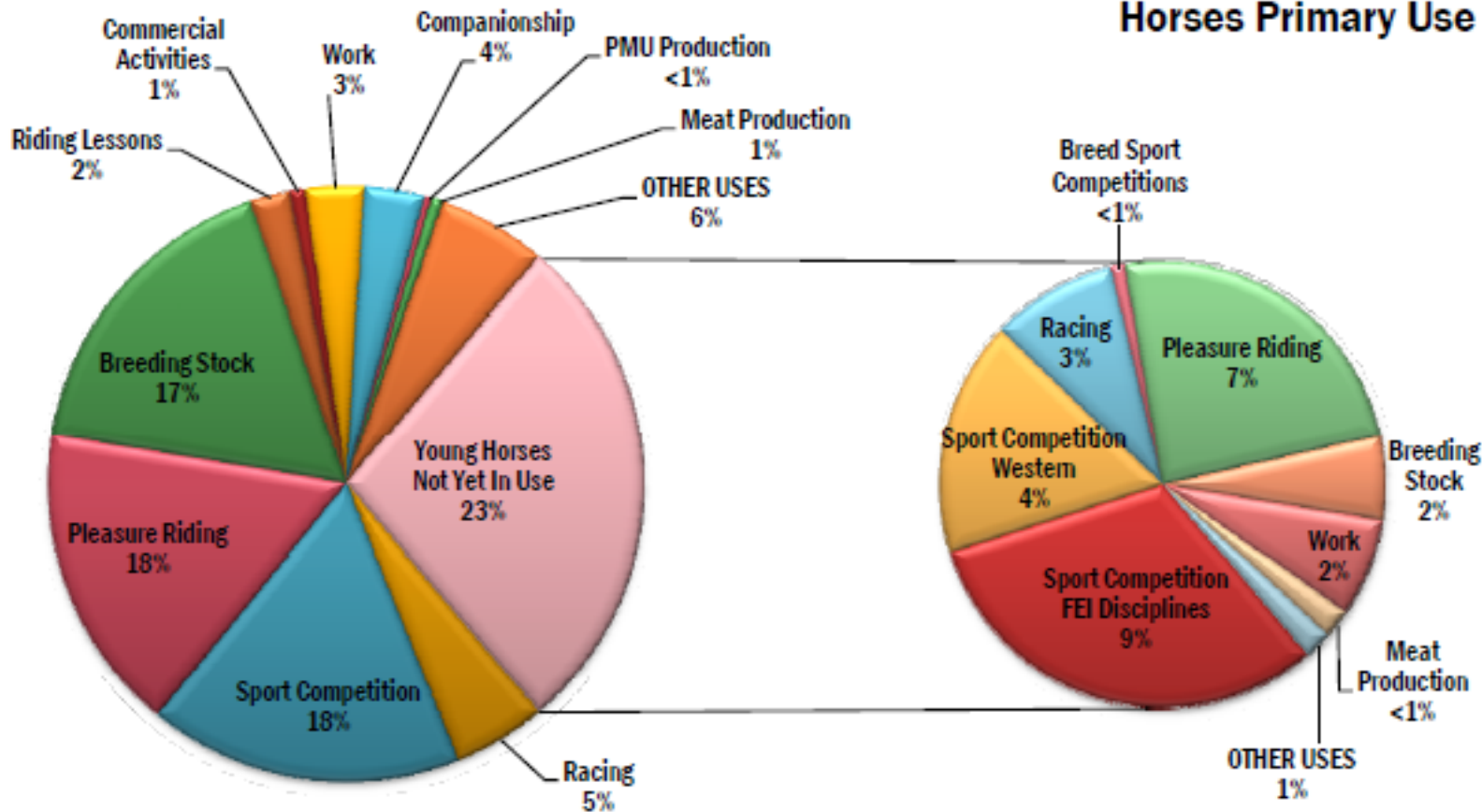
From 2010 Canadian Horse Industry Profile Study

Horse Distribution in Canada

Economic Benefits of the Horse Industry in Canada

- The horse industry contributes just over 19 million dollars annually to the economy of Canada
- The horse industry supports about 154,000 jobs both on and off farm

Horses Primary Use



From 2010 Canadian Horse Industry Profile Study

Horse Use in Canada

The Oversupply of Horses

- * The aging baby boomers are downsizing their herds resulting in large numbers of horses for sale
- * Horses are remaining healthy and active into their geriatric years
- * Societal aversion to horse slaughter and the U.S. ban results in lack of disposal options

Oversupply of Horses (cont'd)

- * Declining rural population results in fewer homes for horses
- * Indiscriminate and uncontrolled breeding results in large numbers of low value horses
- * Inadequate and improper training methods results in horses with behavior or ability issues that are difficult to sell

Decreasing Demand for Horses

- * Decreasing size of generations subsequent to the Baby Boomers resulting in less potential horse owners
 - * In 2010 the median age of horse owners was 50 to 59 years
 - * 24% of all horse owners were 60 years of age or older

Decreasing Demand (cont'd)

- * Small rural population reduces the opportunity for involvement with horses
- * Increased choices for recreational pursuits
- * Increased emphasis on sedentary indoor activities

Decreasing Demand (cont'd)

- * The cost of horse ownership has risen sharply in the last decade
 - * In 2010 estimated to be between \$2,700 and \$5000 annually
- * Lack of disposable income during times of economic stress impacts the ability to care for a horse



Geriatric Horse



Behavior Issues



Conformational Faults



**Non Life Threatening
Injury**



Not Suited to Job



Wild Horses



Normal Healthy Horses

Creation of Unwanted Horses

- * Cost of horse ownership especially in times of economic instability
- * Indiscriminate breeding practices leading to low value offspring
- * Uninformed horse owners practicing poor management
- * Lack of affordable and accessible end of life options



Abandoned to Starve



Euthanasia



Slaughter



Rescue Agencies

Solutions

- * Provide useful and productive lives for unwanted horses that already exist
- * Emphasize the need to prevent the creation of more unwanted horses.

Existing Horses

1. Retraining and repurposing of horses in to new careers
 - * Unwanted Horse Coalition in the U.S.
 - * Five R Program of Equine Canada
 - * National and local programs to retrain and repurpose Thoroughbred and Standardbred race horses

Existing Horses

2. Promote recreational involvement with horses rather than high end competition
3. Emphasize the wellness and physical aspect of involvement with horses
4. Education and awareness for new horse owners with minimal experience

Reducing New Numbers

1. Stop irresponsible breeding
2. The promotion of castration of colts prior to breeding age
3. Provide quality education for equine service providers
4. Well trained and knowledgeable law enforcement officers
5. New owner legislation
6. Dealing with end of life issues



**Every Horse Wanted and
Loved**