



If interested in participating contact the Maryland Horse Industry Board:

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Maryland Equine Experience Center Network



Mission Statement: It is the purpose of the Equine Experience Center Network of Maryland to provide a quality venue for all interested individuals and/or groups to learn about any and all aspects of horses and horsemanship in the State of Maryland.

Vision Statement: There is a profound interest in horses in today's society. Yet there is a lack of awareness and understanding about this magnificent animal. This unique scenario creates a wonderful opportunity to educate the public about the different aspects of horsemanship and to develop enjoyable experiences with horses. Every aspect of the horse industry is found in Maryland which gives us a great opportunity to share with anyone who is interested the chance to learn more about this wonderful creature. So it is our intent to create Equine Experience Centers which are facilities and/or organizations that are certified to educate the public about the different aspects of the horse industry in Maryland and have a passion to share this interest in a safe, friendly and fun environment.

Some examples of MD Equine Experience Centers might include:

1. Licensed Stables—which would teach horse handling, riding, care and feeding, requirements of owning a horse, basic farrier and veterinary care, different styles of riding and good horsemanship practices. Participants don't necessarily have to ride, but can be provided an opportunity to interact with horses in a welcoming, friendly and safe environment.
2. Race Tracks—A track facility might have regularly-scheduled tours. This would be a great opportunity to dispel the myths about how racing is abusive.
3. Breeding Farms—An opportunity through a regular schedule of tours to educate people about the different breeds and to showcase the outstanding care that our horses receive.
4. Training Centers—To educate about the care, time and dedication that goes into this process.
5. Breed Clubs—an opportunity to showcase a particular breed.
6. Facilities & Shows—certain equine venues and shows around the state can incorporate equine-related activities for kids and folks of all ages to have fun and learn more about horses.

These are just some examples of how we can take advantage of the existing venues in Maryland to educate interested parties.

The initial objective of MHIB is to build a statewide network of MD Equine Experience Centers from our group of Licensed Stables who voluntarily want to participate in the program.

Criteria: The facilities must be clean and neatly cared for as a demonstration of the best that the Maryland horse industry has to offer. A facility must demonstrate an emphasis on safety for both horse and human. There needs to be a clear concern of demonstrating what is in the best interest of the horse. The standards of the Certified Horsemanship Association are a good start for facilities offering riding, but must also be expanded to include non-riding stables and activities. Owner/operators would participate on a voluntary basis, but need to attend periodic information sessions to learn about the Equine Experience Center concept. Above all, these places need to be “customer friendly” environments (think of the “Disney experience”), welcoming to total neophytes who know nothing about horses and equipped to give these folks positive, educational and enjoyable experiences.