

Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Equine Related Businesses in New York State

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For the use of: Cornell Cooperative Extension Equine (CCE Equine) and The New York State Horse Council (NYSHC)

Survey Response Description

The New York State Horse Council (NYSHC) and Cornell Cooperative Extension Equine (CCE Equine) partnered in mid-March 2020 to create a COVID-19 impact assessment survey for equine related business owners and managers in New York State. This survey was released in April 2020 with the objective to better understand the perceived economic impact COVID-19 had on New York State Equine related businesses.

The target population was businesses owners or managers of equine-related business in New York State, including, but not limited to: feed suppliers, veterinarians, horse lesson or training facilities, breeding facilities and transportation services. The survey had over 500 respondents that indicated owning an equine-related business that serves New York State. The majority of respondents indicated their business and being either a lesson or training facility or a boarding facility.

Businesses owners and managers were asked to report their annual gross revenue for a typical year. Annual gross income was reported as being less than \$100,000.00 among 70% of the respondents. Respondents also indicated if their business was considered essential under the Pause Plan. Sixty-three respondents (13%) reported that their entire business was considered essential while 202 respondents (43%) reported parts of their business as being considered essential.

When presented the question “How severe do you expect the effects of COVID-19 to be on your business?”, 150 respondents (33%) reported the effects of COVID-19 to be “extremely severe”, 138 (29%) indicated “very severe” and 110 (23%) indicated the expected effects of COVID-19 to be “moderately severe”. Sixty-six respondents (10%) indicated the effects of COVID-19 to be either “slightly severe” or “not severe at all”.

There were 231 respondents (49%) that indicated they would be somewhat likely or extremely likely to make

temporary or permanent reduction to staff due to COVID-19. While 131 respondents indicated “somewhat unlikely” or “extremely unlikely” when asked about temporarily or permanently making reduction to their staff, there were 105 respondents (23%) that responded “neither likely nor unlikely”.

There were 228 respondents (49%) that indicated their business will incur or has already incurred additional expenses. When asked “Will your business incur or has it already incurred any additional expenses due to COVID-19?”, 161 respondents reported “No” and 69 respondents reported they were unsure.

For the questions “Are you concerned that you may lose your business due to the COVID-19 crisis?”, there were 159 respondents (34%) that indicated yes, 162 respondents (34%) that indicated no and 150 respondents (32%) that indicated they were unsure.

Survey Discussion

The purpose of this survey was to provide an opportunity for equine-related businesses owners and managers to report the perceived impact COVID-19 had on their business. There is perceived financial distress among these equine related business owners. Over 30% of respondents indicated concern of losing their business while over another 30% of respondents indicated they were unsure if they would lose their business due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Despite the reported struggle equine-related businesses are encountering, 73% indicated not receiving any financial benefit for programs, loans, or tax credits to offset losses. Respondents reported they had “Applied for Funding but haven’t heard back” and “Applied for PPE but haven’t received any monies as of yet”. Thirty seven percent of respondents reported needing financial assistance to keep daily activities of their business going. This survey provides insight to the equine industry and the economic distress that is occurring.

One respondent wrote that the COVID-19 crisis was “crippling any source of income- but we continue to have all of our normal expenses as horses need to be fed and cared for which is a high expense...”. Businesses are clearly indicating financial concern; more information needs to be gathered to better understand the severity of

the COVID-19 crisis has been on the equine industry in New York State.

For more questions on the data collected from the survey or interest in using the data, please contact Brianna Hughes Resource Educator with CCE-Equine of CCE Saratoga County at bh548@cornell.edu or Sarah Collier Recording Secretary of the New York State Horse Council at sarah.collier@nyshc.org.

CCE Equine is a division of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County that was established in 2006 to provide equine education for adults in Saratoga County, the Capital Region and beyond. More information on CCE-Equine can be found on their website at <http://ccesaratoga.org/agriculture/cce-equine>.

