

**Statement Adopted by the SCHC Board  
as submitted by the Unwanted Horse Committee  
December 14, 2009**

Reality is not always a shiny place with gleaming horses in tidy stables and fat, retired horses and ponies grazing emerald pastures. Today's reality holds too many unwanted and unusable horses: the old, the intractable, the chronically or expensively lame or ill. Reality is several years of high hay prices, high fuel costs, lost jobs, foreclosed homes, and low prices for marketable horses. In these times, the horse is a luxury, a reflection of discretionary income that is dwindling rapidly. The wanted horse is a luxury; the unwanted horse is a burden. That burden is being reflected in the increasing numbers of abandoned, neglected, and abused horses. According to the 2009 Unwanted Horses Coalition Survey, nationwide Rescue/Adoption Facilities are turning away an average of 38% of the horses brought to them. In our rural state of South Carolina, it is probably higher.

The SCHC needs to address this issue with its SC resident horse owners. It is suggested that the board take action in the following steps:

1. Create an Unwanted Horse tab on our website. It should state our definition of the Unwanted Horse as defined and adopted by the American Horse Council: "Horses which are no longer wanted by their current owner because they are old, injured, sick, unmanageable, fail to meet owner's expectations (e.g. performance, color, or breeding) or their owner can no longer afford them."
2. Create a directory under this tab that lists organizations, programs, and rescue operations with their contact info.
3. Ask all district directors to send in contacts and/or organizations within their counties that offer help for unwanted horses.
4. List the options for owners with unwanted horses: sale, trade, lease, donate, humane euthanasia.
5. Partner with any and all universities, colleges, and technical schools offering equine programs to set up educational seminars on "Owning Responsibly". Further expand with farriers and veterinarians and equine specialists.
6. Ultimately create a relief fund to assist in gelding stallions, to assist in large rescue operations, and to assist in catastrophic occurrences such as displacement of horses in a hurricane, tornado, flooding, etc.