

# INFO SHEET

## Veterinary Services

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

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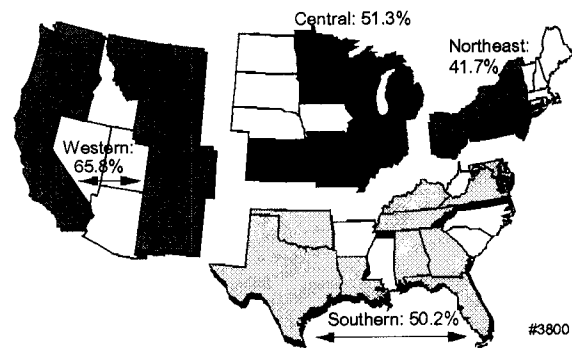
## Transportation of U.S. Equids

Equids in the United States are moved around the country and internationally. Such movement has economic and health implications, therefore understanding equine movement patterns is important.

NAHMS collected data on equine health and management practices from a representative sample of equine operations in 28 states<sup>1</sup>. These operations represented about three-fourths of the equine population and three-fourths of operations with equids in the U.S. For this study, equids were defined as horses, miniature horses, ponies, mules, donkeys, and burros. Overall 2,904 operations with one or more equids participated in the Equine '98 Study's first interviews from March 16 through April 10, 1998. More detailed information on the study and the sampling methodology is available in NAHMS Equine '98 tabular summary reports (Part II, pages 67-70).

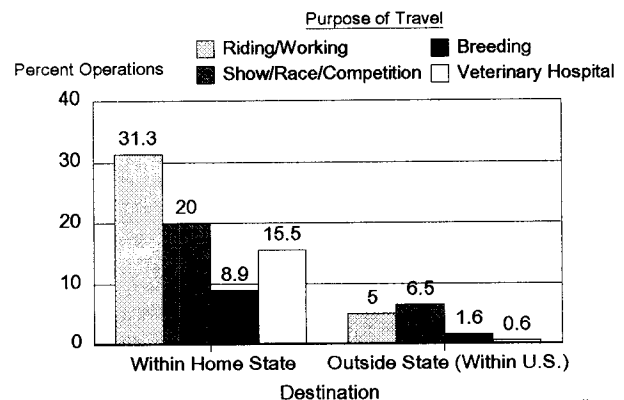
Overall, 54.6 percent of equine operations transported resident equids off their home operation and back by vehicle in 1997. Resident equids were those animals for which the operation was a home base as opposed to visiting animals. Operations with primary functions of boarding/training or breeding were more likely to have transported equids in 1997 than operations with other functions (89.4 and 84.3 percent, respectively). Over three-fourths of operations where the primary use of equids was either for show/competition, racing, or breeding transported equids by vehicle during 1997 (97.0, 87.8, and 79.1 percent, respectively). Also, the percentage of operations transporting equids increased with increasing size of operation (35.4 and 87.9 percent of operations with 1-2 and 20 or more resident equids, respectively).

Figure 1  
Percent of Operations Where Resident Equids Were Transported Within State for Any Purpose and Returned to the Home Operation by Region, 1997



Over one-half (53.0 percent) of all equine operations transported resident equids by vehicle within their home state in 1997, while only 12.2 and 0.3 percent of operations transported resident equids outside of the state (but within the U.S.) and internationally, respectively. More operations (65.8 percent) in the Western region transported animals within state and returned them to their home operation than any other region (Figure 1). The percentages of operations

Figure 2  
Percent of Operations\* by Destination for Resident Equids Transported One or More Times and Returned to the Home Operation and Purpose of Travel, 1997



\* Percent of all operations, whether or not they transported equids for any purpose.

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<sup>1</sup> Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

transporting animals outside of their home state and returning them to their home operation was similar across regions.

A higher percentage of operations transported equids by vehicle within state for the purpose of riding/working than for any other purpose (Figure 2 on the previous page). The next most common purpose for transporting equids within state was for show/race/competition (20.0 percent). A similar percentage (15.5 percent) of operations transported equids at least once within state to a veterinary hospital in 1997. For transportation out of state but within the U.S., the percentages of operations transporting equids for the purposes of riding/working and show/race/competition were similar. Less than 2 percent of operations transported animals out of state for breeding, veterinary hospital visits, or other reasons.

For operations that transported equids for a given purpose within state, 10 or more trips were more likely to be taken for riding/working or for show/race/competition (41.5 and 47.5 percent of operations, respectively, Figure 3) than if they transported the equids for breeding or veterinary hospital visits (13.5 and 16.7 percent taking 10 or more trips, respectively). Although fewer operations made out-of-state trips compared to in-state trips, proportionately similar percentages of out-of-state and in-state trips were for veterinary care. Of operations that transported equids for specific purposes outside of the state but within the U.S., the percentages of operations making 10 or more trips were lower for riding/working and showing/races/competing purposes compared to within-state travel.

**Operation average maximum** distance traveled (whether or not by vehicle) was similar across regions (156 miles), although it varied by the primary use of equids (Figure 4). Longer trips were taken when equids were used for showing/competition (369 miles), racing (348 miles), and breeding (268 miles). Operation average maximum distances traveled were lower for operations with the primary uses of pleasure or farm/ranch work. Maximum distance traveled increased markedly with increasing operation size (Figure 5).

Figure 3  
Percent of Operations\* Where Resident Equids Took 10 or More Trips by Destination and Purpose of Trip, 1997

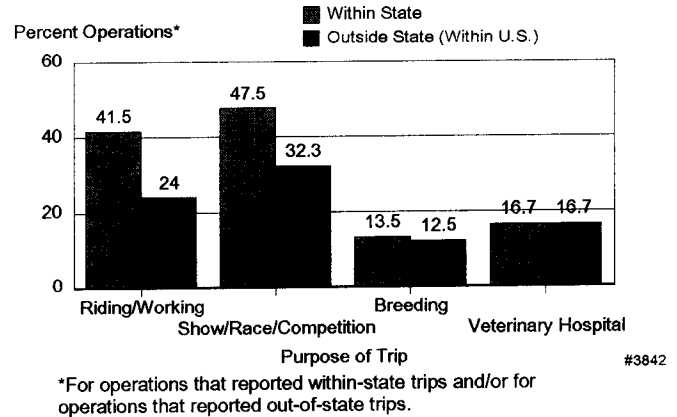


Figure 4  
Operation\* Average Maximum Distance Resident Equids Traveled One Way and Returned to the Home Operation by Primary Use of Equids, 1997

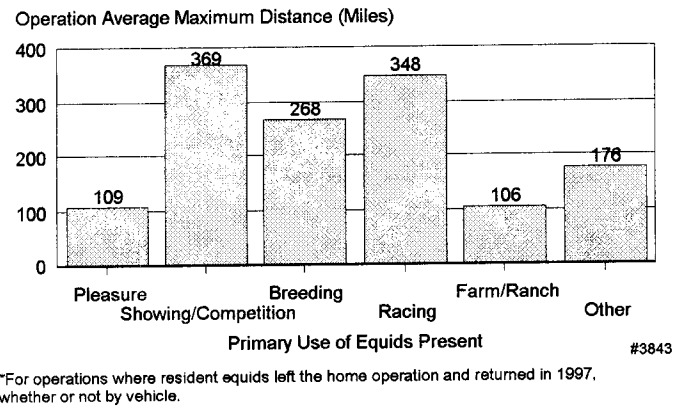
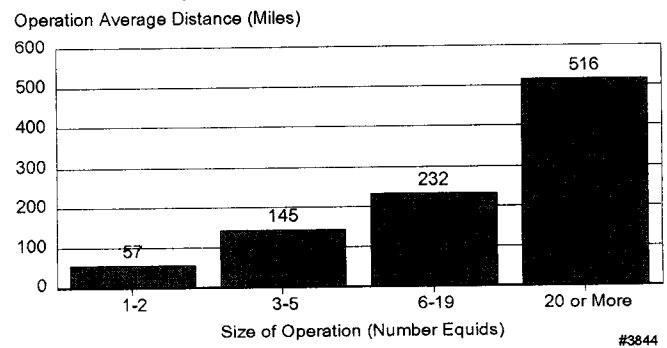


Figure 5  
Operation Average Maximum Distance (Miles) Resident Equids Traveled One-way and Returned by Size of Operation, 1997



For more information on NAHMS or the Equine '98 Study, contact: Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health  
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