



Canada: The Equestrian Market

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November 08

Summary

The thriving Canadian equine market presents excellent opportunities for U.S. companies specializing in equine related products. Following the gold and silver medals wins by the Canadian Equestrian Team at the 2008 Olympics the growth of the equine sector is projected to accelerate. This anticipated growth is predicted by [Equine Canada](#), the national body that represents Canadian equestrian sports. Canadians will require everything from additional boarding stables, feed and veterinary services to saddlery, tack and other horse-related equipment, thereby presenting significant opportunities for U.S. providers of these products and services.

Market Overview

The Canadian equine industry is estimated at \$12.5 billion per year; of which \$2.6 billion is generated by horse racing. This booming industry experiences participation rates of over 120,000 adults and children each year in all horse-related sporting activities. The majority of participants are pleasure riders, followed by competitors, coaches or trainers and lastly breeders. Recently, “baby boomers” have been returning to equestrian activities in large numbers as pleasure riders. Pleasure riders are considered to be the leading influence on growth in the equestrian sector, as new owners purchase horses and the equipment necessary to establish farms and stables.

Overall, there are approximately 290,000 pleasure horses and roughly 47,200 pleasure riders in the Canadian market. Between 1998 and 2003, approximately 37,000 new owners entered the market. Regional increases were highest in the Maritime provinces (except Newfoundland), ranging from 70 to 100 percent. Increases in Québec, Alberta, and British Columbia were 50 percent, 46 percent, and 42 percent respectively. Although Ontario only reported a 19.2 percent increase in horse owners, this represents an increase of over seven thousand new owners and accounted for twenty percent of the nationwide growth.

As a result of this growth, the market has experienced increased investment in tack and equipment, horse-related equipment, property improvements and the sale of horses. In 2003, capital investment on horses reached almost \$1.7 billion, while horse-related property investment exceeded \$8.7 billion. Capital investment on horse-related equipment surpassed \$1.2 billion and tack and saddlery investment was about \$0.9 billion. Between 1998 and 2008, the national average investment in tack and equipment per horse increased by 58 percent. British Columbia, Alberta, Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia all reported an average increased investment per horse of between 100 to 150 percent and Ontario was close behind at ninety-seven percent.

The above figures demonstrate the growth potential in the market related to new horse owners. A current owner adding horses to a herd doesn't necessarily have to purchase more tack and equipment as they can share what they already have among horses. However, new owners with their first or second horse must invest more in tack and equipment, and thus present significant opportunities for U.S. vendors of these products.

U.S. Opportunities

U.S. companies are already seeing the benefits of this growth as imports of tack, saddlery, riding gear and other horse-related equipment from the U.S. are increasing. U.S. imports of saddlery and harnesses alone have grown approximately 26 percent between 2003 and 2007, an increase from \$13 million to \$16.5 million. U.S. vendors of consumer goods, such as saddlery, tack and other horse-related equipment, should consider Canada as a natural expansion of the U.S. market.

Although there are many equestrian related shows and events throughout Canada, U.S. companies should note that Canada is home to one of North America's most prestigious show jumping tournaments, the Masters. This show takes place at Spruce Meadows, in Calgary, Alberta and attracts the world's finest athletes. Held in conjunction with the Masters Show Jumping tournament is the Equi-Fair trade show. Opportunities exist at Equi-Fair for U.S. vendors to present their products and services to all persons interested in equines. For more information visit www.sprucemeadows.com.

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For More Information

The U.S. Commercial Service in Ottawa, Canada can be contacted via e-mail at: Tracey.Ford@mail.doc.gov; Phone: 613-688-5406; Fax: 613-238-5999; or visit our website: www.buyusa.gov/Canada.

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Comments and Suggestions: We welcome your comments and suggestions regarding this market research. You can e-mail us your comments/suggestions to: Customer.Care@mail.doc.gov. Please include the name of the applicable market research in your e-mail. We greatly appreciate your feedback.

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