

Canada's
National
Horse is
Endangered

Again!



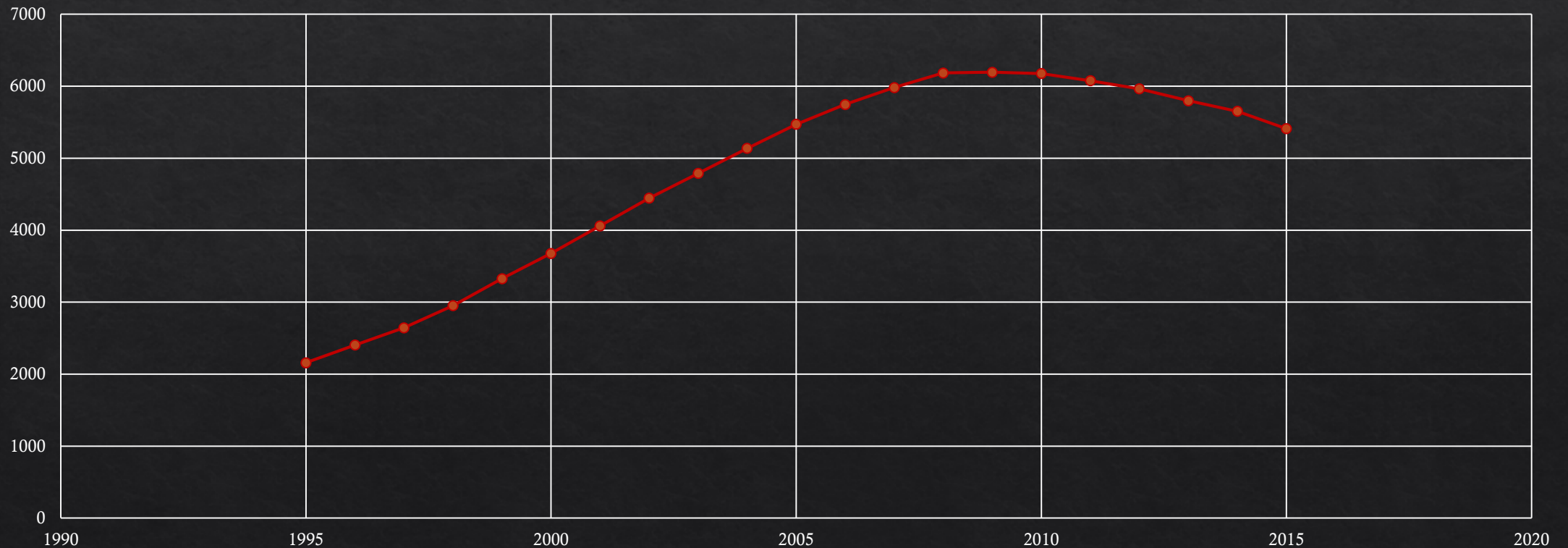
The warning bell is sounding for the Canadian Horse breed.



◆ Once again, our country's National horse is on the verge of extinction...

Why?

- ◆ The total population of Canadian Horses has been on a sharp decline since 2009



How can this be the case when some sources quote the breed number as being over 6000 horses?

- ◇ The sad fact is that many of these horses are deceased however have never been reported as such to the breed registry
- ◇ Others have are aged and are well past their reproductive years
- ◇ Many are in homes where their owners have no intention of ever producing foals
- ◇ Due to the economic crisis, many breeders have cut back on their stock, gelded their stallions, or have gotten out of the business entirely
- ◇ The reality is that there are now less than 2000 Canadian Horses estimated to remain in the breeding pool that will be able to reproduce and ensure horses for future generations

Declining registrations

- ◆ Since 2008, yearly registrations have been drastically declining, to the point where the breed is consistently hovering at 200 or less registrations per year.
- ◆ This number of 200 registrations per year is the threshold for alarm, prompting conservation groups such as the Livestock Conservancy to move the Canadian from its prior “threatened” status to “critical”.
- ◆ With registration numbers this low, the breed is simply not sustainable as there are not enough new individuals being born to replace those being lost.

Stallion Declaration reports

- ◆ At the end of each year, stallion declarations must be sent to the CLRC noting how many registered Canadian Horse stallions were bred to registered mares.
- ◆ In 2014, 100 owners provided only 195 declarations.
- ◆ This means that the absolute maximum number of foals expected for 2015 will be 195. Since not all breedings result in foals, the number of foal registrations will inevitably be less than this.
- ◆ By 2016, the actual number of horses registered for 2015 was 135. This broke down as follows:
 - ◆ Horses born in 2015 and which were registered in 2015: 34 females & 16 males
So only 50 foals born in 2015 were actually registered in 2015
 - ◆ Horses born in 2014 and registered in 2015: 22 females & 16 males
So this added an additional 38 to those already registered for 2014.
 - ◆ Horses born in other years and registered in 2015: 17 females & 20 males
Thus this added an additional 37 in total to the number of horses registered in other years prior to 2014.

- ◆ This shows that for the 195 stallion breeding reports declared in 2014, only 50 foals were registered as a result of these breedings. Thus only **25%** of the reported breedings resulted in the production of a registered foal by the end of the 2015 reporting period.
- ◆ This suggests either a delay in reporting by the breeders, or the possibility that some foals produced may never be registered by the breeder.
- ◆ Or it may also be that the breeder plans to save money by selling them without registration papers. In this situation, it becomes contingent on the new buyer to have to do the paperwork, which they should **NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DOING!** By Canadian law and the Animal Pedigree Act, it is the seller/breeders responsibility to register the foal before sale. In most cases, if a horse is sold to a buyer unregistered, relying on the buyer to follow through with this, it often never happens.
- ◆ Either of the above scenarios typically result in horses being lost to the breed.
- ◆ These troubling numbers may also reflect the trend of our aging breeding population of mares and stallions being less fertile, and thus in being less successful in producing foals.
- ◆ Regardless of the cause, this trend is troubling indeed. It clearly shows that the number of registered foals produced each year, does and will continue to drop catastrophically, the likes of which have not been seen since before the early '90's.

Other reasons why numbers are dropping – Ownership profile shift

- ◆ Since 2008, the shift in ownership profile has changed.
- ◆ Prior to 2008, there were a mix of individual owners, as well as larger scale breeders from whom people could reliably obtain horses.
- ◆ Since 2008, many of these larger breeding operations are now gone – victims of the economy and the rising costs of horse raising in a poor sales market.
- ◆ With the changing ownership profile, most Canadian horses are now owned singly as riding horses. This includes the vast majority of potential breeding mares.

Mare ownership

- ◆ There are currently estimated to be less than 3000 mares 20 years of age and younger left in the breed.
- ◆ Of this number, probably at least 1000 (or more) are too old or too young to be used by breeding.
- ◆ Recent surveys of horse ownership done in Quebec and BC indicate that nearly 50-60% of all mares owned, are in homes where they are used as the primary riding horse and where there are no plans to breed them, ever.
- ◆ This means that the entire breeding population of mares left may be much less than the 2000 initially estimated.
- ◆ A more realistic number may be that only a 1000 or so potential breeding mares in total remain in the entire breed. This is a very small number to have to rely on, to be able to produce foals and contribute to the breed's survival.

Declining stallion ownership

- ◆ Also noted, has been a significant decline in stallion ownership, particularly outside of QC.
- ◆ Prior to 2008, there were between 20 - 30 Canadian stallions standing at stud in BC.
- ◆ According to a recent survey, there are now only about 10 stallion owners left in the province who are currently breeding. Of these, the majority are located in remote areas of the province and do not offer shipped semen, so these stallions are not readily accessible to the majority of mare owners in the province.
- ◆ This means that currently in BC, there are maybe only 3 or 4 stallions that are centrally located and that offer comprehensive breeding services making them readily available to mare owners.
- ◆ This represents a 1000% drop in stallion ownership in BC over just the past decade.

In summation

- ◆ This troubling situation is echoed in each Canadian province. There is no question that the breed is in serious trouble. Registrations are at an all-time low, many breeders have gone out of business, and the vast majority of mares are in the hands of single owners who have no plan to breed them, or to preserve their lines in the breed gene pool.

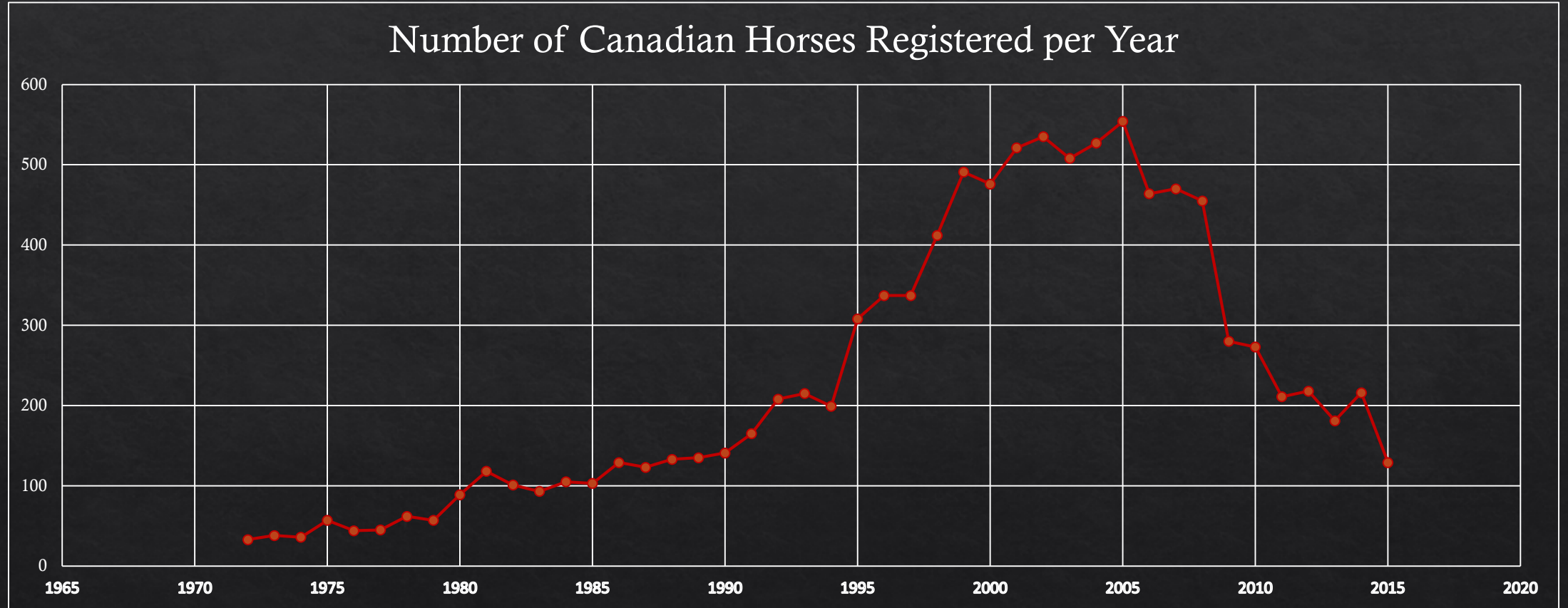
Rare breed owner - responsibility

- ◆ Victoria Tollman, Executive Director of the Equus Survival trust very eloquently summed up the situation. She says, "Every worthy mare should be in purebred production and contribute at least two foals (or more if you can support that) back to the gene pool. Every mare should also have a good daughter to replace her in the breeding program when the mare is retired." "Still each person's situation is their own, and they must act accordingly. Only you know what you can support. And if you can't support any [foals] during the breeding life of your horses, I suggest you lease them out, trade them for a gelding or senior Canadian in need of a retirement home, or sell or gift them to breeders who can. You owe that to your breed. So, no ... it's not easy being a rare breed steward. The sacrifices are many. The challenges tough. The rewards? Priceless ..."

Breed Preservation – how can mare owners help?

- ◆ Those of us concerned about the breed's preservation urge Canadian mare owners to seriously consider Victoria's suggestions. To ensure that the breed continues, and that every mare's genes contribute to the gene pool, we encourage all mare owners to consider breeding their mares at least once or twice in her lifetime so that she can replace herself.
- ◆ In order to best contribute to the breed, choose the highest quality stallion possible, and which best compliments the mare.
- ◆ In order to make the breeding count, it's not enough to choose a stallion based on convenience or the most affordable stud fee. Be open to using shipped cooled or frozen semen to achieve this.
- ◆ Register your foals after they are born, and especially before they are sold.
- ◆ Help to maintain Canada's beloved National breed before it is too late!

More Breed Number Statistics



What is happening?

- ◆ Simply put, not enough foals are being produced to replace the adults being lost.
- ◆ In order to maintain the current population of around 6000 horses worldwide, we need to have a minimum of 450 foal registrations per year.
- ◆ In 2015, only 135 horses were registered. Of this number, only 50 were foals actually born in 2015

Dropping Registrations

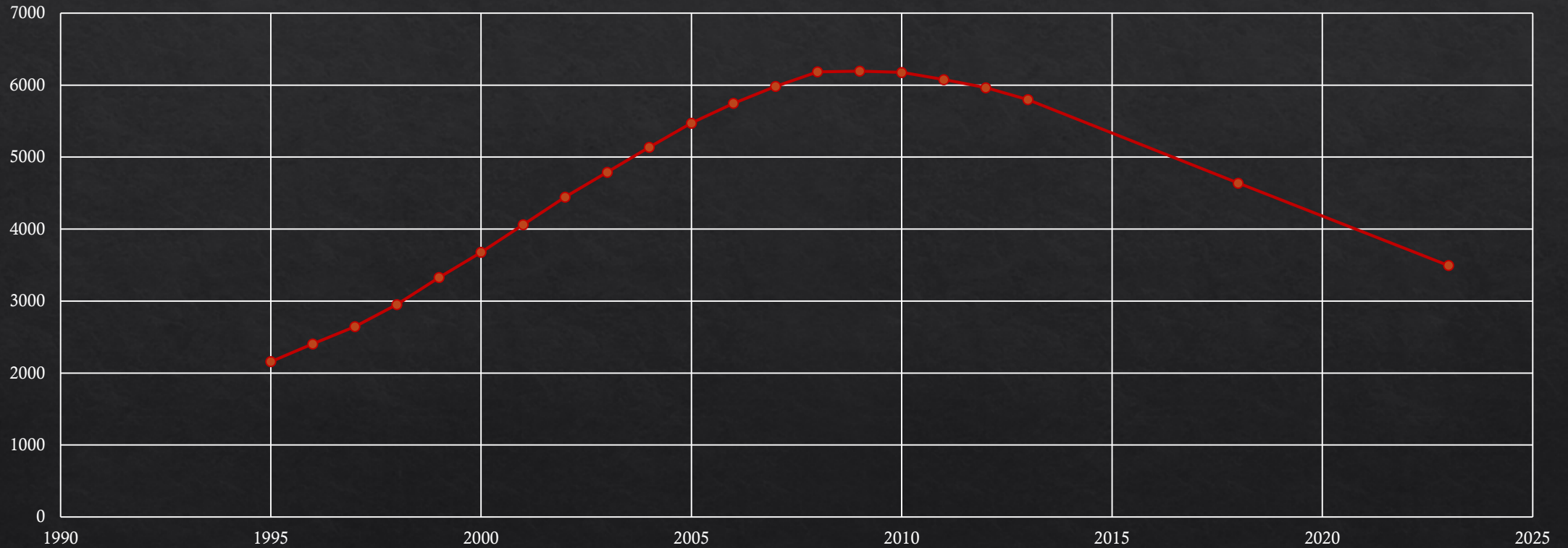
- ◆ At the current rate of registrations, the breed population is currently dropping by 250-300 per year, and this number will likely soon increase to about 500 per year
- ◆ This may not seem like much however it represents a loss of about 5-10% of the total population per year
- ◆ Since 2011, the breed population has already dropped from 6000 to 5400

Dropping Population

- ◆ At the current rate, in less than another five years time, the population will decrease by about one third, to approximately 4000-4500
- ◆ And in another five years, it will be down to less than 3000, which means we will have lost HALF of our treasured Canadian Horse breed in just one decade!

Projected Canadian Horse Numbers

Canadian Horse Population by year Population



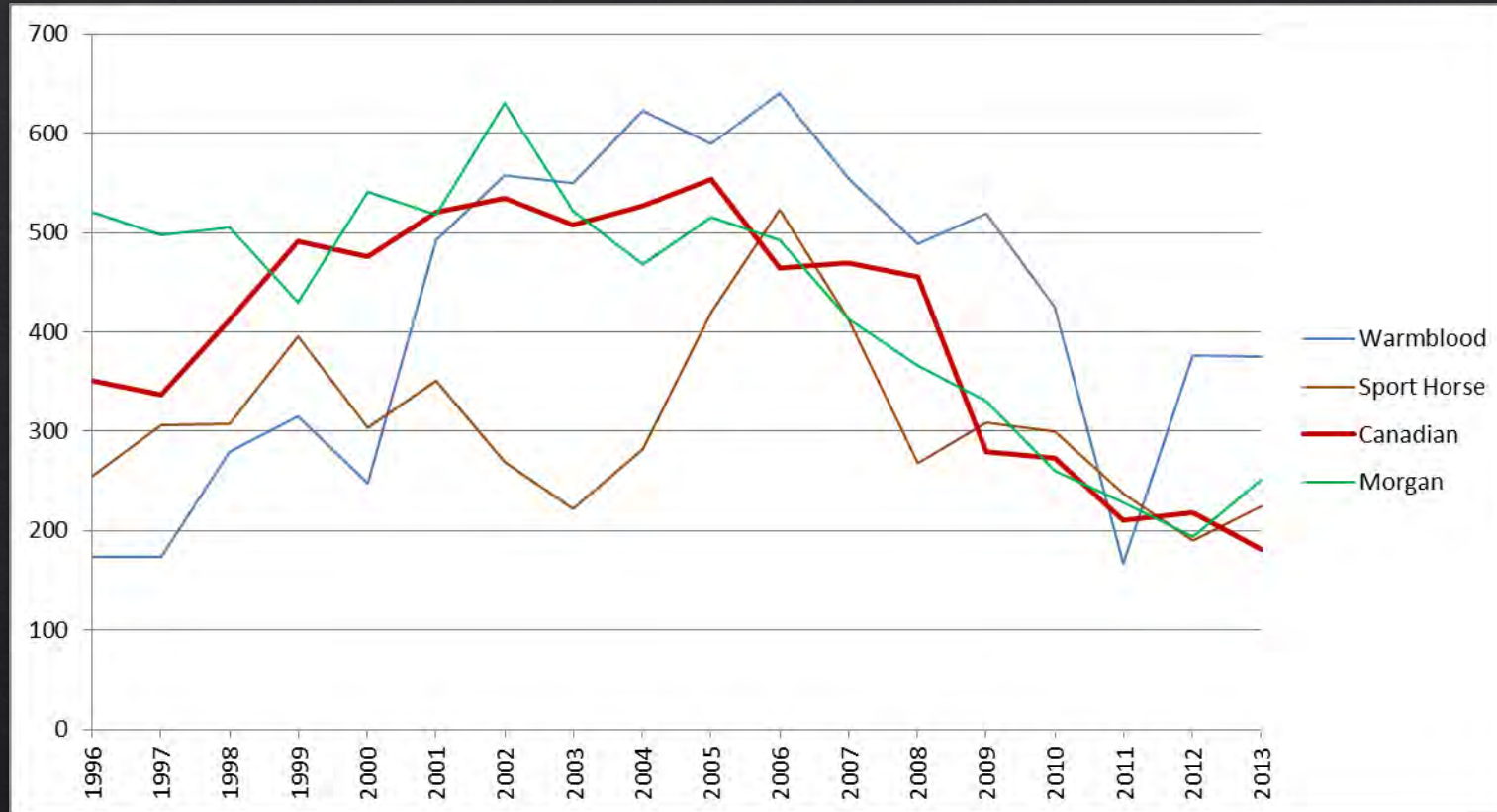
What does this mean?

- ◆ Our Canadian Horse breed is in crisis.
- ◆ As of 2015, the breed status has once again be reclassified as “Critical” by the Livestock Conservancy (LC)
- ◆ According to the LC, the breed census must satisfy the following numerical guidelines to be classified as **Critical**: Fewer than 200 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 2,000
- ◆ Despite the fact that the breed population is currently above the cut off level, the lack of breeding animals left in the reproductive pool combined with the precipitous downwards trend in registrations have resulted in a rapidly decreasing population that is unable to sustain itself and will continue to be so. Because of this, the breed’s status has been changed to reflect this trend

Why is this happening now?

- ◆ Despite the fact that other breeds are showing recovery and resurgence in numbers, for some reason this doesn't seem to be the case with the Canadian Horse
- ◆ Just as with other breeds, there is increased interest in the Canadian Horse, however without foals being produced, ironically buyers are now finding a scarcity of animals on the market...

Canadian Horse compared to other breeds



Why are other breeds faring better?

- ◆ Registrations for other breeds such as the Warmblood, Sporthorse and Morgan are all showing improvements in numbers whereas the Canadian is not
- ◆ This may be due to the fact that the numbers of Canadian Horses were so much smaller to begin with.
- ◆ Compounding this was that when many of the Canadian Horse breeders stopped breeding, they gelded their best stallions and sold off their breeding stock to non-breeding clients, thereby removing them from the breeding pool

What will the loss of the Canadian Horse mean?

- ◆ The loss of the Canadian Horse is more than the loss of a rare breed or genetic diversity. It's the loss of our national identity!
- ◆ This breed is both something uniquely Canadian and an integral part of our national heritage
- ◆ The Canadian Horse has been here longer than many Canadian people and their own family generations – almost 350 years now
- ◆ They helped to settle the country – fields were plowed, children taken to school on their backs, sleds were raced on the weekends, and families driven into town all by Canadians
- ◆ This breed is truly and uniquely ours – Our National Horse of Canada!

What will the loss of the Canadian Horse mean?

- ◆ Not only will the nation of Canada lose a valuable part of their culture, identity and history, so will people as a whole lose
- ◆ More than any other breed, Le Cheval Canadien has the affectionate, people oriented temperament that is much needed in an increasingly technological world, where people are less connected to nature, and more disconnected from each other, than ever before
- ◆ Canadian Horses are accessible and suitable to a wide variety of people – ranging from little kids, experienced horsemen, mature adults returning to riding, those having horses for the first time, senior citizens, and for people with disabilities
- ◆ As the experience of CHHAPS members has shown over and over again, the Canadian Horse has a unique capacity to enrich people's lives. They want to connect with people – in fact they demand it!

Ten Reasons why **YOU** need a Canadian Horse!



They're **PATRIOTIC!**

They are officially the National Horse of Canada as well as Quebec's Heritage/Patrimonial Horse



They're BEAUTIFUL!



They're **SMART!**



They're **STRONG/HARD WORKING!**



They're **FRIENDLY!**



They're **VERSATILE!**



They're **EASY KEEPERS!**



They're **BRAVE!**



They're **FUNNY!**



& They have **GREAT FEET!**



If you are already the fortunate owner
of a Canadian Horse,
here's what you can do to further help
preserve this once again endangered
breed:

1. GET YOUR HORSE OUT THERE!

◆ Canadian Horses are their own best advertisement!

◆ Take your horse out to as many events as you can, and when there, be sure to let other people know what they are.

◆ Show your horse in as many open shows as possible

◆ If you are not interested in showing, there are still many other ways to get your Canadians in the public eye.

Consider participating in:

◆ Breed demos

◆ Clinics

◆ Versatility competitions at provincial exhibitions

◆ Canada Day celebrations

◆ Charity trail rides

◆ And any other places where your horses will reach a larger audience than they might even at a traditional horse show



2. LEASE OR LEND YOUR HORSE

- ◆ If you have a Canadian horse but don't have the time or ability to show him off, consider leasing your horse to someone who does
- ◆ Get young people interested in the breed by leasing or lending your horse through your local 4H organization
- ◆ If you can afford to, sponsor a young rider. We need more young people engaged with the breed, and the Canadian Horse is perfect for them!
- ◆ The reality is that we NEED to have more young people getting interested in and engaged with the Canadian Horse, otherwise the breed will be lost as current owners/breeders age out of ownership



3. CONSIDER BREEDING

- ◆ You don't have to be a "big breeder" to contribute
- ◆ If you have a good mare, especially one that has proven performance , rare bloodlines, and superior temperament, please consider breeding her!
- ◆ If you don't have facilities for breeding, consider a breeding lease to someone who does.
- ◆ If you have an exceptional colt, consider keeping him entire, or at least collecting his semen and having it frozen before you geld him.
- ◆ Contact long time breeders who have had experience with many Canadian Horses over the years for advice and suggestions regarding your horses and the best matches for them



4. ADVERTISE “ON THE SPOT” WHEREVER YOU GO

- ◇ Have information on the Canadian Horse (and where to get them) with you anywhere and everywhere that you take your horse
- ◇ Take CHHAPS business cards and rack cards to any horse-related events that you attend
- ◇ Make up and display a stall card with information about your horse and the breed wherever you show or attend events
- ◇ Even a simple trail ride or a play day can be an opportunity to get the word out!



Lets show the world what the Canadian Horse has to offer!





For more information on
the Canadian Horse or on
our organization, the
Canadian Horse Heritage
and Preservation Society,
please contact
www.chhaps.org