

THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF EQUINE EVENTS IN VERMONT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Vermont Horse Council, in partnership with the UVM College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs), engaged the Center for Rural Studies to conduct this economic contribution analysis. The purpose of the study is to gain a deeper understanding of the size of the equine events industry in Vermont, and its role and impact in the Vermont economy. This report focuses specifically on equine events and the economic impacts of non-resident event participants – only one element of Vermont’s much broader equine industry.

The results demonstrate that equine events have a measurable impact on the Vermont state economy. This report focuses on the statewide economic impacts, however, it is clear that a few communities experience more substantial economic impacts from equine events than others. The Vermont Summer Festival, a six-week event held annually in Dorset, Vermont, accounts for approximately 44% of all estimated equine event participants in the state and has a sizeable economic impact in Manchester and surrounding communities. The Green Mountain Horse Association (GMHA) in South Woodstock hosts approximately 65 competitive, educational, and recreational equestrian events in five disciplines from April through October each year, accounting for approximately 33% of all estimated equine event participants in the state and contributing significantly to the Woodstock area economy. Numerous other organizations offer a range of events across the state each year, adding to the impact of the largest and most visible shows noted here. Key findings of the study include:

- An estimated 8,800 parties participated in established Vermont Equine Events in summer and fall 2018.
- The average party size for both Vermont resident and non-resident parties was 2 people.
- Seventy-two percent of parties were from outside of Vermont. The remaining 28% were Vermont residents.
- Out-of-state parties spent a median of 4 days and 3 nights in Vermont to participate in an equine event.
- Most Vermont parties spent 1 day and 0 nights away from their own home to participate in an equine event.
- Out-of-state parties spent an average of \$1,393 on lodging and activities and \$1,047 on event specific costs, totaling \$2,440 per event.
- In-state parties spent an average of \$121 on lodging and activities, and an average of \$385 on event specific costs, totaling \$506 per event.
- Total direct spending in Vermont by out-of-state parties is estimated to be \$15,462,850.
- Spending by out-of-state parties generated a total of \$21,680,891 in local economic activity, including \$11,932,621 in the tourism (lodging, food & drink, area attractions), retail, transportation, agricultural and sporting events sectors and \$5,262,681 in related sectors.
- Equine event participant expenditures supported 314 jobs in the local economy, with 240 of those jobs in the tourism, agricultural, and event sectors.
- Every dollar contributed in value added in the tourism, agricultural, and event sectors, such as wages and profit, as a result of equine events, adds an additional \$0.90 to in the economy.
- For every job in the tourism, agricultural, and event sectors as a result of equine events, 0.3 additional jobs are supported in the Vermont economy.



INTRODUCTION

Vermont is home to a thriving and diverse equine industry, with horses and ponies a common sight across the rural landscape. Vermont's equine sector is comprised of both agricultural and recreational pursuits, including breeding, training, trail riding, education, and boarding activities, as well as an array of competitive activities. Horses are also routinely put to work in Vermont in traditional ways that may be less common in other parts of the country, such as logging, and wagon and sleigh rides.

To gain a deeper understanding of the size of the industry, and its role and impact in the Vermont economy, the Vermont Horse Council, in partnership with the UVM College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) undertook this contribution analysis of equine events. Vermont hosts competitions for a variety of disciplines—from dressage and eventing to competitive trail riding and combined driving. Venues range from county fairgrounds in Addison and Bradford to the Green Mountain Horse Association's grounds in South Woodstock and the Harold Beebe Farm in East Dorset—offering opportunities for novices and professionals alike. The dollar value of expenditures made by equine event participants in Vermont had never been quantified across the state before, and the Vermont Horse Council is interested in quantifying the current contribution of those events to the Vermont economy. The analysis presented within the report considers a range of equine event participants and how their spending in Vermont supports jobs, earnings, and revenue for local businesses and employees. It also considers additional tax revenue for the state.

The Vermont Horse Council is a volunteer-run organization whose mission is to unite, serve, and support all equine activities and interests in Vermont and beyond. The VHC was incorporated as a 501c3 in 1975 to represent the interests of all equestrians – “Creating a Unified Voice for all Equines”. The Council has a tradition as a hardworking practical organization relying on the generosity of volunteers to lead, manage and implement the goals of the organization. Maintaining access to trails across the state has always been a priority and the Council has been a leader in equine events including hosting an All Breed Fair, and co-hosting Horsin' Around and the Equine Industry Summit.

The Council supports education through its scholarship programs and free member clinics. Widely known for its organized trail rides, the Council recently transitioned its efforts to advocating for access for equestrian users, and for providing amenities at popular locations such as the equine trail system at Groton State Forest. The Council works closely with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation to promote equestrian uses on state lands, and partners with the Vermont Farm Bureau to advocate for and represent the equine industry.

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) plays a key role in meeting the University of Vermont's mission as Vermont's Land Grant University with programs that range from the basic science of molecular genetics to plant and animal ecosystems, and from human nutrition to international development. In addition to its teaching mission, CALs has a strong research focus and serves as Vermont's Agricultural Experiment Station, with a focus on research that will serve the interest of Vermonters. CALs is also the organizational home of the historic UVM Morgan Horse Farm in Weybridge, Vermont.

While this particular study focuses specifically on equine events held in the state of Vermont, VHC envisions conducting a second study to assess the economic contribution of horse ownership and related business activities in the state.

SIMILAR STUDIES CONDUCTED IN OTHER STATES

Previous economic contribution studies have focused on equine events in other locales across the country. A 2015 study in Loudoun County, Virginia investigated the spending patterns of in-county, in-state, and out-of-state participants and spectators by surveying over 600 individuals at 12 randomly selected events in 2013. Results found that out-of-state participants (61%) spent an average \$2,245 per event and in-state participants spent \$2,204 while in-county residents spent \$1,309. These events included races, steeplechases, polo matches, and multiple day horse shows. This study estimated total direct expenditures of \$19,022,272 and total adjusted direct expenditure of \$14,208,088 from events within Loudoun County (Rephann, 2015).

Researchers at Purdue University sought to complete the first comprehensive study of horse shows in the state of Indiana in 2011 (Conners, Couetil, Furdek, & Russell, 2011). They estimated an average of 89 horse entries per show reflecting a wide range of events within the state, primarily focused on specific breeds. This study also considered the impact of horse show operating expenses. They estimated the total impact of the horse show industry to be \$2,211,672 on an annual basis, based on an analysis of business operating expenses.

Green Mountain Horse Association (GMHA), located in South Woodstock, Vermont released an economic impact study conducted by Dartmouth College's Tuck School of business in early 2011. The report was based on a mail survey distributed to people who had participated in GMHA events between 2007 and 2011. Participant per day spending was reported across visitor segments including trainers and barn staff (\$232/day), spectators (\$224/day) and competitors and riders (\$210/day). Visitor direct spending totaled \$2.75 million and the report estimates a total economic impact of \$3.54 million on the local area, defined as within a 30-mile driving radius of GMHA's facility in South Woodstock, Vermont.

Several of the studies mentioned above, in addition to others, investigate the economic impacts of the entire equine industry within a given state, county, or township, including studies conducted in Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, and Virginia. The equine industry is defined differently for each study, but generally includes all activities involved in breeding, raising, selling and using horses for commercial and recreational purposes, including boarding facilities, rehabilitation facilities, racing facilities, therapeutic riding facilities, veterinarians, and farriers. Some of these studies have included discussion of other values or services provided by the equine industry, such as the preservation of working landscapes and open lands. These existing studies provide valuable information as the Vermont Horse Council prepares for an industry-wide study of its own.



METHODOLOGY

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

An economic impact study measures the changes in spending in a geographic area due to a hypothetical change in economic activity, such as a plant closing or opening, a festival or event, or a natural disaster. In other words, an economic impact study measures “what would happen in the economy if happened.” Specifically, an economic impact study calculates the cumulative amount of money that cycles through the economy of the geographic area between industries, households and government agencies as a result of the changes in the industry or events (Day, n.d.).

An economic contribution study measures the economic activity of existing businesses and industries and estimates their contribution to the local economy. While the analytical procedure is slightly different, results for economic impact and economic contribution studies are reported and interpreted the same way.

The economic impact or contribution of an activity or event accounts for three effects on the economy: direct, indirect and induced effects. Using an equine event as an example:

- The direct effect results from the purchase of food, lodging, gasoline, and other services by event participants.
- The indirect effect results from the event organizers purchasing goods and services and hiring workers to host the event. For instance, an event organizer rents tents from a local vendor, and purchases equipment from other local vendors to successfully implement its event.
- The induced effect results from the effects of the changes in household income due to the economic activity from the direct and indirect effects. For example, event, restaurant, and hotel employees spend their paychecks buying food at the grocery store and on other goods and services.
- The sum of the direct, indirect and induced effects is the total economic impact or contribution.

CRS utilized Implan software for this study. Implan is an input-output model that is frequently used by federal and state governments, universities, and among private sector consultants to conduct economic impact and economic contribution analysis. In the IMPLAN version used for this study, the economy- including transactions between industries, institutions, and households- is represented by 536 sectors based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes. Each sector represents a type of industry and spending patterns within that industry. Matching the expenditure data recorded from event participants to the appropriate sectors (food, lodging, gasoline, etc.) allows one to estimate not only what the participants spent, but the percentage of that spending that stays in the local economy, as well as the extent to which that spending circulates through the local economy, creating additional impacts.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The Vermont Horse Council (VHC) and the Center for Rural Studies collaborated to design a short 18-question survey to administer to equine event participants. For the purposes of this study, an equine event was defined as a competition or special clinic that had been established for at least three years.

The survey questions were designed to help characterize event participants and their spending patterns in

Vermont during equine events. The survey instrument is included in the Appendix. CRS staff provided a training for VHC volunteers during a webinar that reviewed expectations and procedures for conducting surveys. A recorded version was available to volunteers that were recruited later in the study.

VHC volunteers administered the survey at 20 Vermont Equine Events between June and October 2018 (Table 1). The events were selected from a list of 84 events identified by VHC members during the 2018 competition season. Anticipated event size, event discipline, and the availability of VHC volunteers to conduct surveys were the primary factors used to select the 20 events. Event organizers were contacted prior to the event to ask permission to conduct the survey during event. The study utilized a convenience sample and volunteers administered the majority of the surveys on site at events. The criteria for participation were presence at an equine event and a willingness to participate in the survey. If an event participant indicated a preference to complete the survey online, VHC volunteers provided a postcard with a survey link. Individuals were asked if they'd already completed the survey at another event and were directed to complete the survey just once throughout the summer and fall, regardless of the number of events they attended. While most survey respondents were event participants, a portion played other roles, such as spectator, vendor, or volunteer.

A total of 441 surveys were collected. The completed surveys were sent to and entered into a database by CRS staff. CRS staff analyzed the survey data and made calculations to estimate the economic impact of equine events in Vermont. Responses to questions not necessary in calculating estimated economic impacts are included in the Appendix.

TABLE 1: EQUINE EVENT SURVEY SCHEDULE

Which Vermont equine event did you attend?	# of Surveys	Event Size	Event Type	Date (2018)
GMHA Dressage Days	61	Large	Dressage	July 27-29
Vermont Summer Festival	60	Large	Hunter Jumper	July 19, Aug. 11
GMHA Driving Combined Test & CDE	52	Large	Driving	Aug 24-26
GMHA Fall Foliage (Pleasure) Ride	46	Large	Trail	Sept 28-30
GMHA Festival of Eventing	28	Large	Eventing	Aug. 10-12
Vermont Dressage Days	1	Large	Dressage	Aug. 11-12
GMHA 25/25/50	19	Medium	Distance	Aug. 4-5
GMHA Distance Days	16	Medium	Distance	Aug. 31-Sept. 2
Huntington Farm Horse Trials	16	Medium	Eventing	July 8
The Lippitt Country CDSS Show	13	Medium	Breed, Dressage, Driving	Aug. 10
Vermont 1 Day 100	8	Medium	Distance	July 21
Vermont Morgan Heritage	26	Small	Driving	July 1
GMHA TREC Clinic	22	Small	Clinic	July 6-8
Charlotte Pony Club Trials and Two Phase	20	Small	Eventing	Sept. 3
Bradford/Connecticut Valley Fair	4	Small	Open Show, Pulling	July 11
The Equestry CDSS Show	2	Small	Dressage	Sept. 8
Hitching Post Farm Horse Trials	1	Small	Eventing	Online
Pond Hill Rodeo	1	Small	Rodeo	Online
Lamoille Valley Field Days	28	Small	Open Show	July 28-29
Addison County Field Days	17	Small	Open Show, Pulling	Aug. 9
Total	441			

EQUINE EVENT DATA & ANALYSIS

The data needed to conduct the analysis included total event participation, average party size, participant spending patterns, and the average length of stay in Vermont for an equine event. CRS used the following methodology to obtain the data needed to model the economic contribution of Vermont equine events.

1. Total participation was estimated by creating a comprehensive list of all summer and fall Vermont equine events, obtaining actual participation numbers wherever possible, and estimating participation numbers based on event size in all other cases. (Total equine event participation figures for the 2018 event season were not available from an existing source. A table showing all events and estimated participation is included in the Appendix.)
2. The other data utilized in the analysis was obtained from 386 surveys conducted at 20 events held in Vermont in the summer and fall of 2018. Approximately 55 survey respondents who indicated that the equine event was not their primary reason for being in a local Vermont community were removed from the analysis. Their expenditures would have existed regardless of the equine event, so should not be attributed to their attendance at an equine event.
3. Using the party size data collected in the survey, CRS determined the average household size for Vermont resident and non-resident participants.
4. Using the party spending estimates collected in the survey, CRS determined the average visitation spending by Vermont resident and non-resident participants.
5. Using the party length of stay estimates collected in the survey, CRS determined the average visitation length by Vermont resident and non-resident participants.
6. CRS then multiplied the average spending by the participant estimates to determine the event participant total spending for both Vermont residents and non-residents
7. The total spending figures for non-residents were then used to make baseline economic contribution estimates utilizing the input-output model IMPLAN. The expenditures made by non-residents account for the “net-new” spending, spending that without the equine events, would not occur in the State of Vermont economy.

VISITATION ESTIMATES

Estimating visitation rates required using the master list of events held during the 2018 competition season. If the total number of entries at an event was not known, the number of entries was defined conservatively based on the size of the event. For small events without reported entry counts, the study assumed 25 entries, for medium events without reported entry counts the study assumed 50 entries, and for large events without reported entry counts, the study assumed 200 entries. Surveys conducted at nearly one quarter of the total events revealed that 72% of participant parties were out-of-state while 28% were Vermont resident parties. CRS assumes participants from in-state and out-of-state were accurately represented by the survey process and estimates 8800 parties participated in equine events within the State of Vermont.

TABLE 2: VERMONT HORSE EVENT ATTENDANCE ESTIMATES

	Count	Percentage
Total Number of Events	84	100.00%
Total number of events at which surveys were conducted	20	23.8%
Total Estimated Participant Parties	8800	100.00%
Total Non-Resident Participant Parties	6336	72.00%
Total Resident Participant Parties	2464	28.00%

Tables 3 and 4 summarize party size and visitation length findings. The mean party size for Vermont residents and non-residents attending equine events was 2 people. Vermont residents who spent the night away from their own home for an event spent a median of 2 days and 2 nights away from home. Non-Vermont residents spent a median of 4 days and 3 nights away from home.

TABLE 3: MEAN PARTY SIZE OF EQUINE EVENT PARTICIPANTS

	Mean Party Size
Non-Resident	2.1
Resident	1.8

TABLE 4: LENGTH OF STAY IN LOCAL VERMONT COMMUNITY FOR AN EQUINE EVENT

	Median Days in VT Community for Event	Median Nights in VT Community for Event
Non-Resident	4	3
Resident	2	2

EQUINE EVENT PARTICIPANT SPENDING IMPACTS

Event participants make expenditures on food, lodging, gasoline, shopping, activities, and other services during their stay in Vermont. The estimated average spending of resident and non-resident event participants is summarized in Table 5. While some Vermont residents reported an overnight stay away from their own home to attend an event, the average number of nights Vermont residents spent away from their home was 0.44. Therefore, per day expenditures and per trip expenditures are considered to be the same for Vermont residents in this study.

TABLE 5: EXPENDITURES: AVERAGE PER PARTY SPENDING (2 PEOPLE) PER EVENT

	Non-Resident Party, Spending Per Trip (3 Nights, 4 Days)	VT Resident Party, Spending Per Day And Per Trip (0 Nights, 1 Day)
Lodging	\$310.01	\$0.00
Food & Drink	\$307.24	\$35.81
Shopping	\$277.20	\$31.43
Visiting Area Attractions	\$190.81	\$8.64
Transportation	\$248.72	\$45.71
Other Activity Costs	\$58.84	\$0.00
Subtotal: Lodging and Activities	\$1,392.82	\$121.59
Entry Fees	\$553.11	\$195.12
Coaching or Training Fees	\$79.97	\$64.51
Stall Rentals	\$260.56	\$46.04
Horse Maintenance/Fee	\$111.69	\$74.89
Other Event Costs/Fees	\$42.33	\$4.29
Subtotal: Event	\$1,047.66	\$384.85
Total Spending	\$2,440.48	\$506.44

Out-of-state parties spent an average of \$1,393 on lodging and activities and an average of \$1,047 on event specific costs, totaling \$2,440 per event. In-state parties spent an average of \$121 on lodging and activities, and an average of \$385 on event specific costs, totaling \$506 per event.

CRS utilized these spending estimates, along with the visitation estimates, to calculate the total spending presented in Table 6. We focus here on non-resident spending as that represents the “new” spending in the Vermont economy. The total direct spending in Vermont for out of state parties is estimated to be \$15,462,850. (Table 6). The total adjusted direct expenditures are estimated to be \$11,932,621 (Table 7). The adjusted direct expenditure represents the amount that stays in the local economy, and the difference between the two is the amount that “leaks” out of the local economy. For example, when an individual spends \$200 at a local inn for the night, the vast majority of that expense may stay in the local economy. However, when that same individual spends \$50 for gasoline at a Vermont retailer, only a small percentage of that \$50 expenditure remains in the local economy, with a large portion going to refineries, wholesalers, and distributors outside of Vermont.

In 2018, equine event participants reported expenditures that generated a total of \$21,680,891 in local economic activity, including \$11,932,621 - the adjusted direct expenditure noted above - in the tourism (lodging, food & drink, area attractions), retail, transportation, agricultural and sporting events sectors and \$5,262,681 in related sectors (Table 7).

A more conservative, accurate measure of the economic contribution of an activity is the total value added measure, which includes wages, profits, dividends, interests, rents, and excise taxes (from the indirect and induced effects). Equine event participant expenditures contributed \$10,948,340 in total value added, with

\$5,768,848 of that in the tourism, agricultural, and event sectors. Lastly, equine event participant expenditures supported 314 jobs in the local economy, with 240 of those jobs in tourism, agricultural, and event sectors. It is important to note that in the model that we used, the job number includes full-time, part-time, and seasonal jobs, and that one person can have more than one job. Therefore, we estimate that the equine event industry supports this number of jobs, but not that it creates this number of new jobs.

TABLE 6: TOTAL ESTIMATED NON-RESIDENT SPENDING

	Per Trip	Per Trip Spending x 6336 Household Trips = Total Spending
Lodging	\$310.01	\$1,964,205.26
Food & Drink	\$307.24	\$1,946,672.64
Shopping	\$277.20	\$1,756,339.20
Visiting Area Attractions	\$190.81	\$1,208,959.49
Transportation	\$248.72	\$1,575,889.92
Other Activity Costs	\$58.84	\$372,810.24
Sub Total: Lodging and Activities	\$1,392.82	\$8,824,876.75
Entry Fees	\$553.11	\$3,504,504.96
Coaching or Training Fees	\$79.97	\$506,689.92
Stall Rentals	\$260.56	\$1,650,908.16
Horse Maintenance/Fee	\$111.69	\$707,667.84
Other Event costs/fees	\$42.33	\$268,202.88
Sub Total: Event Costs	\$1,047.66	\$6,637,973.76
Grand Total	\$2,440.48	\$15,462,850.51

Another measure of the contribution of an activity is the multiplier effect. The total multiplier effect is calculated by dividing the total effect by the direct effect. The multiplier shows how much a dollar or a job in the initial industry adds to the economy. For the baseline estimate, every dollar contributed in value added in the tourism, agricultural, and event sectors, such as wages and profit, adds an additional \$0.90 to the economy. Similarly, for every job in the tourism, agricultural, and event sectors, 0.3 jobs are supported in the Vermont economy.

TABLE 7: IMPLAN RESULTS

	Employment	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	240.6	\$4,472,417	\$5,768,848	\$11,932,621
Indirect Effect	40.8	\$1,540,642	\$2,601,587	\$5,262,681
Induced Effect	33.3	\$1,461,570	\$2,577,905	\$4,485,589
Total Effect	314.7	\$7,474,629	\$10,948,340	\$21,680,891
Multiplier	1.31	1.67	1.90	1.82

Table 8 illustrates the fiscal impacts of the equine events in Vermont. The State of Vermont receives over \$1.3 million in tax revenue as a result of equine events. This does not include the additional local tax revenue that is generated. The majority of these tax funds come from the businesses supporting events and event participants.

TABLE 8: IMPACT OF EQUINE EVENTS ON VERMONT STATE TAXES, 2018

Description	Total State Tax
Tax on Production and Imports (Sales Tax, Property Tax, Motor Vehicle License, etc.)	\$1,106,095
Households (Personal Income, Property, Motor Vehicle, Fines/Fees, Fishing & Hunting, etc.)	\$183,222
Other State Taxes (corporate income, social security, etc.)	\$40,472
Total	\$1,329,789



KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

The equine event industry is clearly an important element of the Vermont economy, and has a particularly strong impact on a handful of communities that support larger events throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons. Spending by out-of-state parties participating in equine events generated a total of \$21,680,891 in local economic activity, including adjusted direct spending of \$11,932,621 in the tourism (lodging, food & drink, area attractions), retail, transportation, agricultural and sporting events sectors and \$5,262,681 in related sectors. Other key findings include:

- An estimated 8,800 parties participated in established Vermont Equine Events in summer and fall 2018.
- On average, party size for both Vermont resident and non-resident parties was 2 people.
- Seventy-two percent of these parties were from outside of Vermont. The remaining 28% were Vermont residents.
- Out-of-state parties spent a median of 4 days and 3 nights in Vermont to participate in an equine event.
- Most Vermont parties spent 1 day and 0 nights away from their own home to participate in an equine event.
- Out-of-state parties spent an average of \$1,393 on lodging and activities and \$1,047 on event specific costs, totaling \$2,440 per event.
- In-state parties spent an average of \$121 on lodging and activities, and an average of \$385 on event specific costs, totaling \$506 per event.
- Total direct spending in Vermont for out of state parties totaled \$15,462,850.
- Equine event participant expenditures supported 314 jobs in the local economy, with 240 of those jobs in tourism, agricultural, and event sectors.
- Ninety-two percent of participants reported being “very likely” to attend additional equine events in Vermont within the next two years.
- When asked why they were likely to attend future events in Vermont, numerous participants cited the beauty of the area, a love for the state, and the quality of the events.

Although substantial, the value of the impact reported here is likely a conservative estimate for a number of reasons. While an effort was made to build a complete event list to estimate participation, some events were likely overlooked. Additionally, this study only considers expenditures by out-of-state participants during events. It does not consider the cost of operations for the event hosts, some of which would add to the overall economic contribution figures. Finally, 3,930 horses were registered in 2018 to participate over the course of the six weeks of the Vermont Summer Festival. Anecdotally, Vermont Summer Festival attendance was reportedly down 20% in 2018 compared to 2017. This 20% would add 700 or more additional participants to the study. Improvements were made to the footing in the competition rings at the Vermont Summer Festival site venue, in response to competitor concerns at end of the 2017 season. Participants in 2018 reported the improvements were noticeable and there is a sense that participation numbers will rebound in 2019.

As with any study, there are limitations of time and resources. A dedicated core of Vermont Horse Council volunteers worked diligently to collect the more than 400 surveys used to craft this report. While this report

provides a solid baseline to begin to quantify the impact of equine events, a greater number of survey responses from a larger number of events would strengthen findings. Additionally, it would be helpful if event hosts or organizers were universally able to encourage participation through their own marketing efforts.

In order to encourage participation, the survey was intentionally brief, with 18 questions. Instead of asking participants to estimate their expenses in a large number of categories, categories were aggregated. For example, the event expense categories were Entry fees, Coaching and Training Fees, Stall Rentals, Horse Maintenance Fees, and Other. Although it would require more time of respondents, more specificity around expenditures through unique survey categories such as: feed, bedding, tack and horse supplies, horse transport, veterinary services, grooming, hardware or garden store purchases, etc., would allow better mapping to match Implan sectors, enabling more precise estimates.

It is also important to note that this study focuses specifically on equine events held within the state of Vermont. The Vermont Horse Council envisions conducting a second study to assess the economic contribution of horse ownership and related businesses in the state. That additional study, once complete, will provide a much more comprehensive understanding of the equine industry in the state, and is likely to shed additional light on the methods and results of this report.

Finally, survey participants had the opportunity to provide any additional comments they had at the end of the survey. A sampling of those of comments is offered below, conveying appreciation of and commitment to Vermont's equine events, as well as opportunities for the equine event industry in the future.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to ride in Vermont. I wish there were more lodging options in the GMHA area, so I could come more often. I travel 22 hours to get here and I need to rest my horse before I ride, so I need more than 1 day"

"Despite the meals being included in the entry fee for this ride, I make a point of eating breakfast each day at the South Woodstock Store, dinner two nights in Woodstock, and I do some shopping for Christmas in the shops in Woodstock. My spending varies each year, but I do leave a somewhat significant (to me anyway) amount of money in Vermont. I also take home maple syrup."

"Love the trails, hospitality, environment, people of Vermont and hope to continue coming here for many years."

"I wish the larger MA Morgan shows could come to VT, but I know the event facilities may not be large enough."

"The environmental impact of these events is significant- horse waste, etc. A {Vermont} event that makes an effort to be environmentally sound and have good practices could be a good draw. I would be drawn to that."



ABOUT THE CENTER FOR RURAL STUDIES

The Center for Rural Studies (CRS) is a nonprofit, fee-for-service research organization that addresses social, economic, and resource-based problems of rural people and communities. Based in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Vermont (UVM), CRS provides consulting and research services in Vermont, the United States, and abroad. The research areas are divided into five main areas: Agriculture, Human Services and Education, Program Evaluation, Rural Community and Economic Development, and Vermont Community Data. The mission of CRS is to promote the dissemination of information through teaching, consulting, research and community outreach. Primary emphasis is placed upon activities that contribute to the search for solutions and alternatives to rural problems and related issues. Bringing decades of experience to its work, CRS recognizes that answers to critical and timely questions often lie within a community or organization.

For any questions or comments about this report, please contact Amy Kelsey, Research Specialist at the Center for Rural Studies at 802-598-4551 or at amy.kelsey@uvm.edu

The Center for Rural Studies is located at: 206 Morrill Hall, Burlington, VT 05405.



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DEMOGRAPHIC AND OTHER SURVEY RESULTS

TABLE 9: PRIMARY RESIDENCE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

	State	Frequency	Percent
Non-VT Resident	MA	84	32.4%
	NH	54	20.8%
	NY	33	12.7%
	CT	28	10.8%
	ME	14	5.4%
	PA	8	3.1%
	FL	7	2.7%
	Quebec	7	2.7%
	NJ	6	2.3%
	Ontario	6	2.3%
	VA	2	0.8%
	CA	1	0.4%
	CO	1	0.4%
	GA	1	0.4%
	IA	1	0.4%
	IL	1	0.4%
	MD	1	0.4%
	MO	1	0.4%
	NC	1	0.4%
	RI	1	0.4%
TN	1	0.4%	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>259</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
VT Resident	<i>Total</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

TABLE 10: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

	Age	Frequency	Percent
Non-VT Resident	Under 20	13	6.2%
	20-29	18	8.6%
	30-39	22	10.5%
	40-49	29	13.9%
	50-59	75	35.9%
	60-69	37	17.7%
	70-79	13	6.2%
	80+	2	1.0%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>209</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
VT Resident	Under 20	2	2.6%
	20-29	10	13.0%
	30-39	11	14.3%
	40-49	8	10.4%
	50-59	15	19.5%
	60-69	23	29.9%
	70-79	7	9.1%
	80+	1	1.3%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

TABLE 11: WITH WHICH GENDER DO YOU IDENTIFY?

	Gender	Frequency	Percent
Non-VT Resident	Female	210	83.0%
	Male	41	16.2%
	Some other gender affiliation	2	0.8%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>253</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
VT Resident	Female	81	77.9%
	Male	23	22.1%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

TABLE 12: PLEASE SELECT THE OPTION THAT BEST REPRESENTS YOUR 2017 HOUSEHOLD INCOME BEFORE TAXES

	Income	Frequency	Percent
Non-VT Resident	\$200,000 or more	62	27.0%
	Between \$150,000 - \$199,999	33	14.3%
	Between \$100,000 - \$149,999	45	19.6%
	Between \$75,000 - \$99,999	33	14.3%
	Between \$50,000 - \$74,999	26	11.3%
	Between \$35,000 - \$49,999	17	7.4%
	\$34,999 or less	14	6.1%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>230</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
VT Resident	\$200,000 or more	3	3.2%
	Between \$150,000 - \$199,999	11	11.6%
	Between \$100,000 - \$149,999	16	16.8%
	Between \$75,000 - \$99,999	8	8.4%
	Between \$50,000 - \$74,999	23	24.2%
	Between \$35,000 - \$49,999	17	17.9%
	\$34,999 or less	17	17.9%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

TABLE 13: DO YOU OWN A HORSE?

		Frequency	Percentage
Non-VT Resident	Yes	226	87.0%
	No	34	13.0%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>260</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
VT Resident	Yes	85	79.0%
	No	22	21.0%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

TABLE 14: HOW MANY HORSES DO YOU OWN?

	Mean	Median	Mode	Minimum	Maximum
Non-VT Resident (n=165)	3.58	3	1	1	20
VT Resident (n=64)	3.59	3	2	1	15

TABLE 15: HOW MANY DAYS IN A TYPICAL YEAR, ON AVERAGE, DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN EQUINE RELATED EVENTS IN VERMONT?

	Mean # of Days	Median # of days
Non-Vermont Resident (n = 251)	11	7
Vermont Resident (n = 101)	25	10

TABLE 16: HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO ATTEND FUTURE HORSE-RELATED EVENTS IN VERMONT WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS?

		Frequency	Percent
Non-VT Resident	Very Likely	232	89.9%
	Somewhat Likely	11	4.3%
	Unsure, Don't Know	7	2.7%
	Somewhat Unlikely	2	0.8%
	Very Unlikely	6	2.3%
	Total	258	100.0%
VT Resident	Very Likely	101	96.2%
	Somewhat Likely	3	2.9%
	Unsure, Don't Know	1	1.0%
	Total	105	100.0%

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

NAME OF EVENT:
DATE:
VOLUNTEER NAME:

Script:

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a volunteer with the Vermont Horse Council.

We are conducting a short survey at a variety of Vermont equine events to better understand the Economic Contributions to the State of Vermont. Even if you rarely attend Vermont events like this today, your responses are helpful in our efforts to develop baseline information about the economic impacts of Equine Events on the state of Vermont. Your participation is completely voluntary and no responses will be reported individually.

1. Have you already been asked to answer questions about your participation here at (NAME EVENT) today?
 - a. IF YES: Do not continue
 - b. IF NO: Do you have about 10 minutes to answer some questions? If yes, skip to #2 below.
 - c. IF NO TIME: Could I have your email address so we can send you an online survey about this event?
2. In order to complete this survey, you will need to have basic familiarity with the expenditures your household has made or will make while travelling to and from and participating at this event. Are you able to report on your household expenditures related to this event?
3. If not, can you connect us with someone else in your household who can?
4. Are you ready to get started?
5. Thank you for your time and assistance today!

Part 1. Your Participation At This Event

This first set of questions asks about your participation at this event today.

1. What is your role in this event? Please select all that apply:
<input type="radio"/> Trainer
<input type="radio"/> Participant/Competitor
<input type="radio"/> Family of Participant/Competitor
<input type="radio"/> Groom
<input type="radio"/> Volunteer
<input type="radio"/> Spectator
<input type="radio"/> Staff
<input type="radio"/> Vendor
<input type="radio"/> Other: Please describe:

2. Is this event the primary reason you are in this Vermont community today?		
<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know

If no, please describe your primary reason:

3. How many adults from your household are here with you (over 18, including yourself)?
 A household consists of one or more people who live in the same dwelling and also share meals or living accommodations. It may consist of a single family or some other grouping of people.

4. How many children from your household are here with you (18 and under)?
 See household definition above.

5. How many days are you in Vermont (including travel time in VT)?
 Please round to the nearest 0.5 days. (ie 1 day, 1.5 days, 2, 2.5, etc.)

6. Are you spending one or more nights in this or a nearby community in Vermont (away from your home) in order to attend this event?

Yes
 No
 Don't know

IF YES, how many nights are you staying? (put 0 if not applicable)

Part 2. Your Spending Related to this Event

The second set of questions asks about your spending related to the event. Participant spending is a very important element of this study. Event participants have an impact on the state economy through their purchases, such as lodging, transportation, food, and beverages. Please do your best to make accurate estimates, and if you feel there is someone else in your household who is better able (and willing) to answer these questions, let us know. Again, all individual responses will be kept confidential.

7. Please indicate the number of nights spent in Vermont in each of these accommodations, for this event. Please indicate the price per night for each of the places you stayed. (put 0 if not applicable)

Accommodation	# of Nights	Price Per Night
Bed and Breakfast		
Air BnB		
Motel/Hotel		
Friend or Relative's Home		
Campground		
Vacation Rental		
Other, please describe:		

8. Please indicate other expenses you have incurred and expect to incur while in Vermont during this horse event by specifying the average amount your household spent in each category on a typical day. (put 0 if not applicable)

Activity	Average Daily Expenditure
Food & Drink (restaurants, onsite food, grocery & convenience stores)	
Shopping (gifts, souvenirs, other shopping)	
Visiting area attractions (tours, farmer's market, museums, science centers, mini golf)	
Transportation (including maintenance, parking, and fuel for personal vehicles)	
Other, please describe:	

9. If you are an event competitor or paying the expenses for a competitor, please indicate total expenses paid to Vermont vendors and businesses in the following categories for/during the event. (put 0 if not applicable)

Expense	Total Amount for Event
Entry Fees	
Coaching or Training fees (to a Vermont-based professional)	
Stall Rentals	
Horse Maintenance/Fee (Horse transport, farrier, vet, grooming fees to VT-based professionals)	
Other, please describe:	

10. How many days in a typical year, on average, do you participate in equine related events in Vermont?
 We are defining event as: a competition that has been established for five or more years and takes place annually within the state of Vermont.
 Please round to the nearest whole number (ie 1, 2, 3, 4 days, etc.)

11. How likely are you to attend future horse-related events in Vermont within the next two years?

<input type="radio"/> Very likely	<input type="radio"/> Somewhat Likely	<input type="radio"/> Unsure, don't know	<input type="radio"/> Somewhat unlikely	<input type="radio"/> Very Unlikely
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Why are you *somewhat likely or very likely* to continue attending horse-related events in Vermont in the next two years?

Why are you *somewhat unlikely or very unlikely* to attend horse-related events in Vermont in the next two years?

Part 3. Demographic Questions.

Finally, this last section asks for some brief demographic information. Again, all individual responses are confidential.

12. Please indicate the city, county, state, and zip code of your primary residence:	
City:	State:
County:	Zip Code:
13. What is your date of birth? (mm/dd/yyyy)	
14. Do you own any equines? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No If yes, how many?	15. With which gender do you identify? <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Some other gender affiliation

16. Please select the option that best represents your 2017 total household income before taxes:
<input type="radio"/> \$34,999 or less
<input type="radio"/> Between \$35,000 - \$49,999
<input type="radio"/> Between \$50,000 - \$74,999
<input type="radio"/> Between \$75,000 - \$99,999
<input type="radio"/> Between \$100,000 - \$149,999
<input type="radio"/> Between \$150,000 - \$199,999
<input type="radio"/> \$200,000 or more

17. Please take a moment to include any relevant questions or comments regarding this research in the space below.

18. Email. May we have your email to share the results of this study and notify you if you have won our raffle for survey participants?	
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Thank you so much for your assistance with this study! Enjoy the rest of the event.

Questions? Please contact Heidi Krantz at the Vermont Horse Council, at vt_horse_council@gmail.com.

TOTAL PARTICIPATION ESTIMATES

NUMBER OF EVENTS	EVENT NAME	Reported Participation or Estimate
1	Addison County Field Days	50
1	Caledonia Field Days	25
1	Charlotte Pony Club Trials and Two Phase	25
1	Chittenden County 4-H Benefit Horse Show	25
1	Connecticut Valley Field Days	25
1	Connecticut Valley Field Days: horse show and pulling	25
1	Connecticut Valley Field Days: pony pulling	25
1	Connecticut Valley Field Days: pulling	25
1	Deerfield County Field Days	25
1	East Hill Farm CDSS Show	25
1	East Hill Farm CDSS Show	25
1	Eddy Farm School CDSS Show	25
1	Eddy Farm School CDSS Show	25
1	Franklin County Field Days	25
18	GMHA 2018 Totals - from their Annual Report (18 events and all pleasure, competitive and endurance trail riders)	2939
	GMHA Competitive & Endurance Trail Riders (all season) - 318 competitors	
	GMHA Dressage (Spring Show, Dressage Days & Fall Show) – 526 competitors	
	GMHA Driving (Spring CT & ADT, August CDE & Fall Classic) - 210 competitors	
	GMHA Eventing (June Horse Trials, Starter Trials, Festival of Eventing & September Horse Trials) - 849 competitors	
	GMHA Eventing Clinic – 6/5-6/7/2018 - 25 competitors	
	GMHA Festival of Eventing Clinic – 8/6-8/8/2018 - 32 competitors	
	GMHA Hunter/Jumper (Spring Show, Summer Show & Fall Show) – 462 competitors	
	GMHA Junior Horsemanship Clinic – 6/24-7/4/2018 - 71 competitors	
	GMHA Pleasure Trail Riders (all season) - 401 participants	
	GMHA The Lucinda Green Clinic had approximately 15 participants.	
	GMHA The Young Riders Clinic had approximately 30 participants.	
1	Hitching Post Farm Horse Trails	50
1	Hitching Post Farm Horse Trials	50
1	Hitching Post Farm Schooling Horse Trials	25
1	Hitching Post Farm Schooling Horse Trials	25
1	Hitching Post Farm Schooling Horse Trials	25
1	Huntington Farm Horse Trials	70
1	Huntington Farm Horse Trials	70
1	Huntington Farm Schooling Horse Trials	25
1	Huntington Farm Schooling Horse Trials	25
1	Huntington Farm Schooling Horse Trials	25
1	Huntington Farm Schooling Horse Trials	25

THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF EQUINE EVENTS IN VERMONT

1	Lamoille Valley Field Days:	25
1	Lamoille Valley Field Days: horse show & gymkana	25
1	Lamoille Valley Field Days: horse/pony pulling	25
1	Long Shadow Farm CDSS Show	25
1	Maple Valley Stables CDSS Show	25
1	Midstate Riding Club Spring ADT	25
1	Orleans County Field Days	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 1	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 10	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 2	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 3	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 4	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 5	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 6	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 7	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 8	25
1	Pond Hill Rodeo Week 9	25
1	The Equestry CDSS Show	25
1	The Equestry CDSS Show	25
1	The Lippit Country CDSS Show	51
1	Triple Combination Farm CDSS Show	25
1	Vermont Summer Festival Week 1 (number of horses - they estimate 3 people per horse)	566
1	Vermont Summer Festival Week 2 (number of horses - they estimate 3 people per horse)	712
1	Vermont Summer Festival Week 3 (number of horses - they estimate 3 people per horse)	798
1	Vermont Summer Festival Week 4 (number of horses - they estimate 3 people per horse)	672
1	Vermont Summer Festival Week 5 (number of horses - they estimate 3 people per horse)	719
1	Vermont Summer Festival Week 6 (number of horses - they estimate 3 people per horse)	463
1	Vermont 1 Day 100	92
1	Vermont Dressage Days	100
1	Vermont Morgan Heritage Days Open Pleasure Show, Continuous Drive, Combined Test & ADT	50
1	VHJA @ Fox Horn Farm	50
1	VHJA @ Fox Horn Farm	25
1	VHJA @ Green Mountain Horse Association	50
1	VHJA @ Green Mountain Horse Association	50
1	VHJA @ Steeple Ridge Farm	25
1	VHJA @ Steeple Ridge Farm	25
1	VHJA @ Twitchell Hill Farm	25
1	VHJA @ Twitchell Hill Farm	25
1	VHJA 2'6" & Above HUNTER & EQUITATION FINALS @ STEEPLERIDGE	25
1	VHJA 2' & Below HUNTER & EQUITATION FINALS @ FOX HORN	25
1	VHJA Spring Clinic @ Steeple Ridge Farm	25
84	Totals	8802