



Bureau of Animal Protection (BAP) Fall 2012 Newsletter

First Level II Equine Neglect Investigations Short Course very successful

As many of you know the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Colorado State University and the Harmony Equine Center combined resources to have our first Level II Equine Neglect Investigations



Short Course. This course covered subjects including more advanced Henneke Equine Body Condition Scoring (especially as it relates to horses lower on the scale), handling young, unbroke and herds of horses, sorting of animals, herd behavior when loading loose as in an impound situation. The class also covered legal issues important to investigators when building a criminal animal neglect case, humane equine restraint, humane euthanasia, emergency medical care and more in depth nutrition for horses and how to use nutrient content as scientifically sound evidence.

The Colorado Department of Agriculture and Bureau of Animal Protection would like to extend a very special thank you to Colorado State University's Equine Science Department including David Denniston PhD, Jerry Black DVM, Karen Hansen PhD, Bobbie Walton, Dr. Mark Fitch; Cindy Schonholtz with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association; Billy Seiber with the Attorney General's Office and Diane Balkin with ALDF. We would also like to thank Duane Adams and the Harmony Equine Center for their hospitality, willingness and contribution to this unparalleled educational opportunity. Without your support a course of this caliber would not be impossible.

Some comments from a few of the attendees:

- "Want more! Informative!"
- "Enjoyed, Dr. Black had very useful info"
- "Very helpful, Bobbie does a good job, keep the same"
- "Awesome!"

Please visit their websites to learn more!

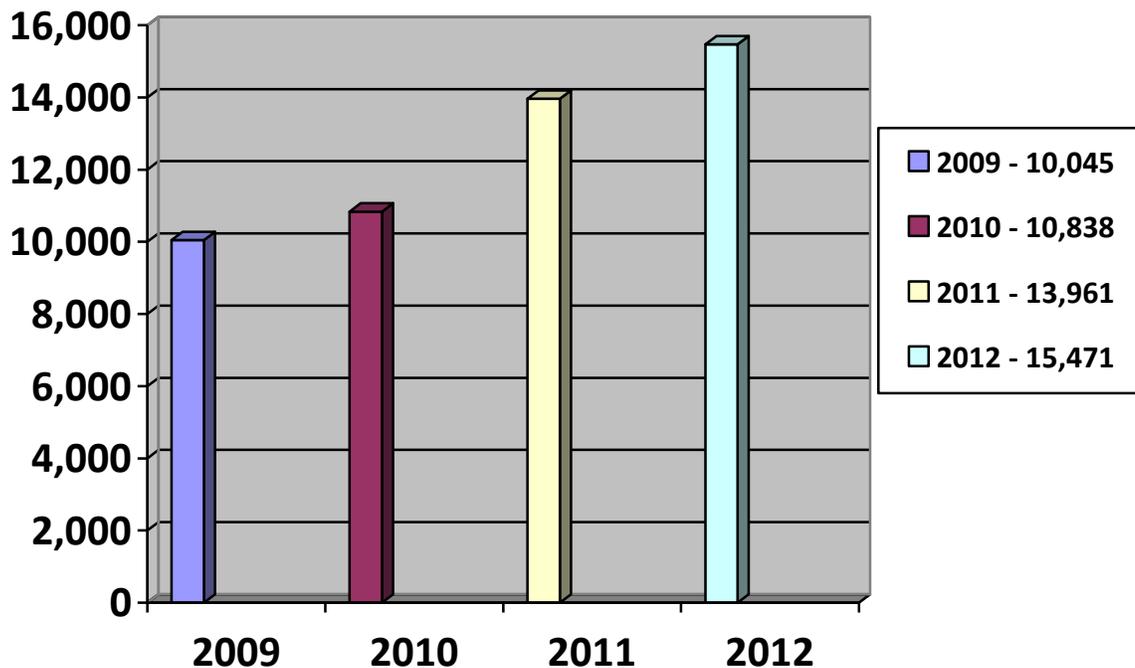
Colorado State University Equine Science - <http://equinescience.colostate.edu/>
Harmony Equine Center - http://www.ddfl.org/services/harmony_equine_center

The BAP Affects Animal Welfare in Colorado

Agencies with Bureau of Animal Protection agents within them diligently report the number of animal cruelty or neglect investigations each month. By rule, the Colorado Department of Agriculture requires the reporting of those statistics by species in order to establish objective data on the actual number of animal cruelty investigations conducted to establish trends and for other purposes. Agencies report the number of investigations done as well as the number of animals impounded. For the purposes of this article, we will concentrate on the number of investigations conducted in areas covered by BAP agents between FY 2008 and FY 2012 and what important points this data has revealed.

Historically, the most investigations are done on canines, the second most investigated species, which is a surprise to most, is equines. A distant third is felines.

- **Canine investigations** – The number of canine investigations appears to be consistently climbing from 2008 to 2012. The reasons these numbers are climbing could be due to factors including economic climate and more BAP agents in more jurisdictions of the state; therefore more investigations being done.

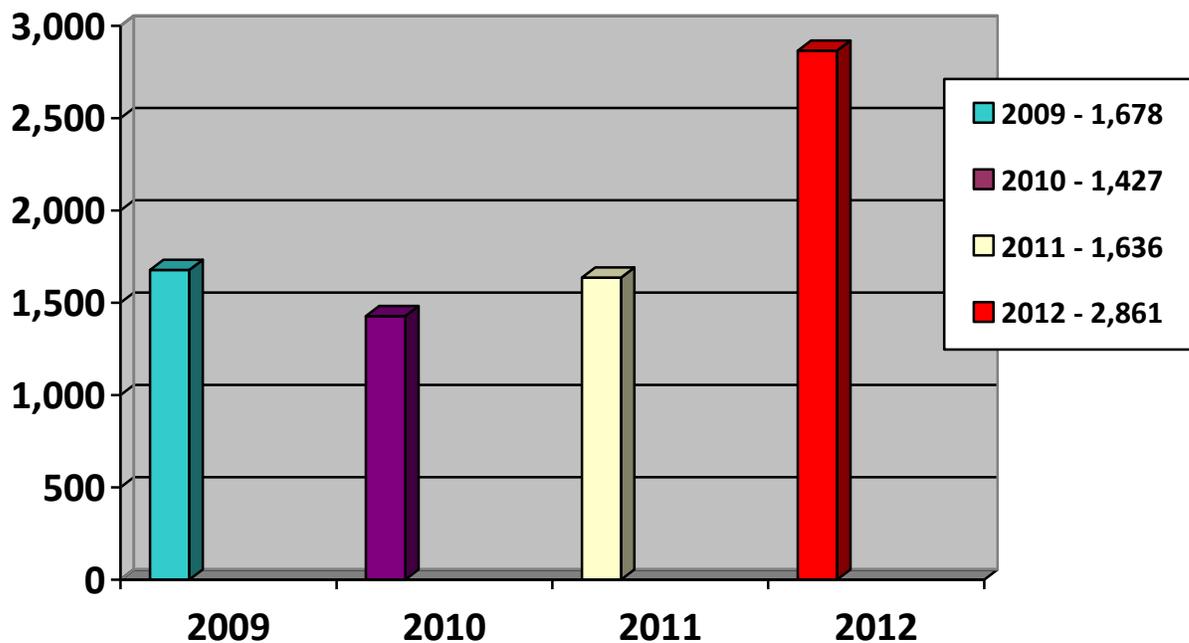


- **Equine investigations** – Equine investigations are not as straight forward as canine investigations appear to be because ownership of all livestock, not the least of which is horses, have many more variables. Horses, like other animals are considered property in

Colorado, however the management of equines is much more sensitive to economic conditions, drought, fuel prices, even the price of steel. First and foremost, farmers, growers of hay, must have water... period. Without water they cannot grow any type of irrigated crop which would include hay crops to feed livestock. The average price of gas in 2008 was \$1.85/gallon, now it has nearly doubled, therefore it cost's much more for a farmer to fill the tractor's fuel tanks so he can run the combines, mowers, rakes, balers and stack wagons. Parts of all machinery break from time to time and of course and must be repaired at a higher cost due to the increased price of steel. All of the above costs, plus labor costs must be spent just to get a hay crop grown and in a stack. In order for local farmers to support their families they must mark up the price of hay. Combine these costs and one can easily understand why much of the hay for sale is now upwards of \$14.00/bale or up to \$450.00/ton when years ago one could buy it for \$120/ton.

One ton is enough to feed one, 1,200 pound horse for about two months depending on quality, class of horse being fed and the amount of waste. Now we must consider the variable of economic climate from the horse owner's standpoint. Disposable income is currently an issue; so too is job availability. Adding to the complications horse owners have are the limited options for horses when they are at the end of their useful life, if they are dangerous, unmanageable or the owner can no longer afford to adequately care for them. When you take a serious look at all of the issues a horse owner has to take into consideration it is easy to see why equine neglect investigations have nearly doubled from 2011 to 2012.

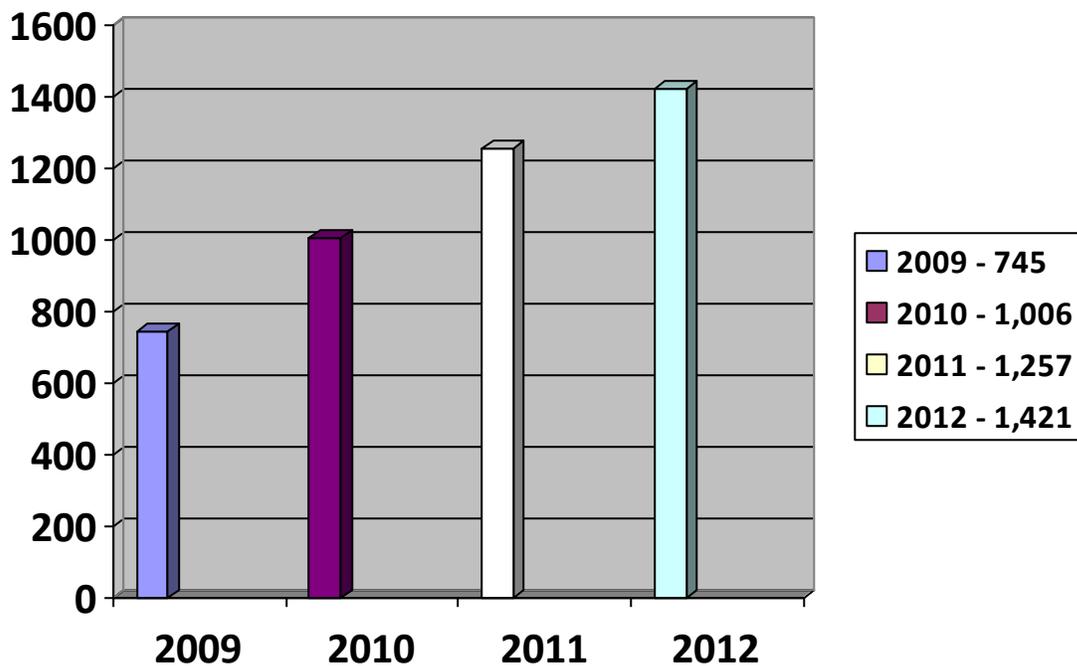
Equine Neglect Investigations



Another reason we have seen an increase in equine neglect investigations is because we have many more areas of the state covered by BAP agents due to the addition of Colorado Humane Society Investigators through Memorandum of Understandings with local law enforcement.

- **Feline investigations** – Feline neglect investigations have actually seen the steadiest increase per capita in neglect and cruelty investigations consistently increasing from 745 in 2009 to 1,421 in 2012; that works out to be an average of 225 more investigations per year. Isn't it interesting that cats so significantly outnumber horses yet there are so many more investigations in equines than there are on cats? Regardless of the reasons behind cats being a distant third in the number of cruelty investigations conducted, it appears to be an unfortunate reality.

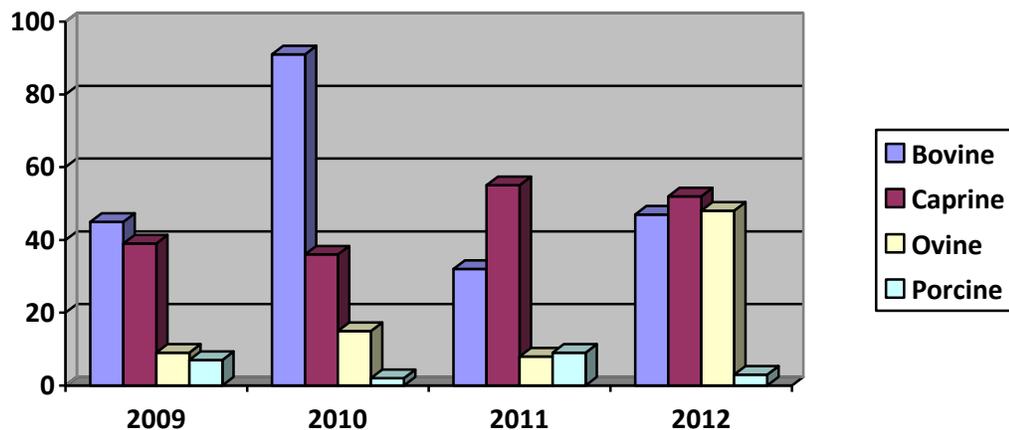
Feline Investigations



- **Livestock, including backyard farm animals and livestock used for agricultural production:**
Livestock (excluding horses) are involved in a very low number of criminal animal cruelty investigations in Colorado. These investigations constitute less than 0.75% of all investigations.

Livestock investigations are illustrated by species (cattle, goats, sheep, and swine) in the following graph. The number of cattle in Colorado is the highest population of livestock compared to all other species. According to the 2012 National Agriculture Statistics Service there are 2.75 million head of cattle, 460,000 head of sheep, roughly 720,000 head of swine and 51,000 goats in Colorado. One can easily see that, as a general rule, farmers, ranchers and multiple species livestock owners take good care of their animals. The Colorado Department of Agriculture is convinced that if that were not the case, we would have many more complaints which would be reflected in the number of investigations the BAP does. Needless to say there are outliers in every profession that can and may very well make a bad reputation for the 99% of the good ones.

Livestock Investigations



On the whole, it is astounding what affect the Bureau of Animal Protection, more specifically Bureau of Animal Protection agents and cooperative law enforcement agencies across the state have on the welfare of all animals in Colorado. It can legitimately be argued that Colorado may be the best state for animal welfare due to the unique statutory structure that allows people (BAP agents) that would otherwise not have authority or knowledge of how to investigate under the state’s animal cruelty statutes. If it weren’t for the Bureau of Animal Protection, its agents and investigators, along with local law enforcement literally thousands upon thousands of animal neglect issues may not otherwise be investigated leaving the animal’s fate unknown.

USDA Hay Report for November 15, 2012

http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/gl_gr310.txt

To learn more about the Bureau of Animal Protection and access more

resources visit: http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/ag_Animals/CBON/1251619863540