

Dear Exhibitor,

On behalf of the show committee, I would like to respond to your email. As you can imagine, it is impossible to make the show perfect for everyone, since everyone's preferences are different. We go over the survey results each year after the show and the questions you have raised in your email have been discussed many times by the committee. For example, last year's dressage riders that responded to the survey overwhelmingly voted to have "dressage day". (Last year we had two partial days.) We've extended the show for 2010 through Sunday and made the last day dressage day. It is where most of the youth classes for dressage have been placed. Many other Youth classes are on Saturday in the hopes that Youth riders that can't miss school can at least show on the weekends. This is a first for extending the show through Sunday. It may work – it may not. We'll have to wait and see the survey results at the end of the show.

We've been requested in the past to move the show up to earlier in the calendar year. This presents a problem with the availability of show facilities. For example, when we inquired of Champions Center about the possibility of having our show there, they had one open date for the year. (I was thrilled that it was in September and not October or November.) Once you are in at a facility, you have a first option on that same weekend for the next year as long as you pay your deposit within 30 days of the close of your event, so new dates rarely become available unless an event gets cancelled. Suitable facilities, like the Champions Center, are few and far between. They work very hard to book every weekend – or they go out of business. We have requested to be on a waiting list for earlier dates should they become available. That presents the problem of what would be the optimal date? Moving into July or August would mean conflicts with the New York Gold Classic and with many county and state fairs where many of our exhibitors (including a great number of youth exhibitors) routinely show every year. The youth riders (specifically 4H) that I have talked with would pick their county fair over the national show if there was a conflict. Because of that, we fear moving the show date would still have a negative impact on youth (and other) participation.

That leaves moving the show into June or early July and that would conflict with the Buckeye Show and the Central Ohio Show. It has also been suggested that the National Show be the culmination of the show year – not the beginning.

As far as the financial segregation of the show, we were asked for a breakdown for last year's membership meeting. I have attached that report for your review. As you will see in the attached report, the bottom line is the classes are split 35% draft and 65% pleasure. The sponsorship by exhibitors was 25% draft and 75% pleasure so yes, the draft exhibitors should up their sponsorship by 10%. The rest of sponsorships were by non-exhibitors who didn't care specifically where their money went. The overall payouts are higher to the draft exhibitors; however, there are no pleasure exhibitors that show a four or six in hand so if you remove those two classes from the equation, the payouts are pretty evenly split. Payouts are the same to pleasure or draft exhibitors that show single or double.

In committee we often discuss what is best for the breed and the promotion of the horse. It is frustrating when we receive many internal comments about pleasure versus draft. It is all one horse. I know that you needed to leave the show before it was over last year so you didn't get to see the stands packed with spectators – a first since I joined the Registry in 2003. What did they come to see? The Draft hitches. Why? Because no other show at that facility has anything like it. Every 4H and open show has halter classes and riding classes – maybe even a few driving classes so, with the exception of a draft breed show, this is unique. That is why word spread through the local community “You've got to come see these horses”. We heard it time and again and the bleachers down both sides of that arena were full for the draft classes. It was phenomenal breed promotion.

Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback. The committee will continue to evaluate and we will do whatever is possible to make the show the best it can be. It is a work in progress.

Ruth Schwab on behalf of the National Show Committee