
Management and exercise of Thoroughbred yearlings during preparation for yearling sales in the North Island of New Zealand

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Survey results were used to gather general information about the management and exercise of Thoroughbred yearlings during a sales preparation. The survey was conducted on North Island stud farms and asked questions about the preparation for the Karaka yearling sales in 2008. Seventy-five farms took part in the survey, which included 1,166 yearlings, representing 82% of those attending these sales. Most (66/75; 88%) of the farms that took part were located in the Northern Districts. The average number of yearlings per farm entering a sales preparation was 10. Most farms started their sales preparations in October or November and the average duration of a preparation was 12 weeks.

The start of sales preparation ranged from September to January, with 44% and 40% of stud farms beginning preparation during October and November, respectively. Most (92%) farms used a combination of both pasture turnout and stabling during yearling preparation, with 63% of yearlings getting >12 hours per day at pasture. Exercise was given to yearlings on 80% of stud farms, with most farms giving exercise at walk. The common methods for exercise were hand walking (67%), followed by a combination of hand walking and a mechanical horse walker (20%) and using a mechanical horse walker only (10%). The main reasons for providing exercise are shown in Figure 1. Most farms gave exercise 5 days a week and 30% of farms used a pre-determined regimen. The survey showed that exercising yearlings and providing time at pasture were common practices during a sales preparation

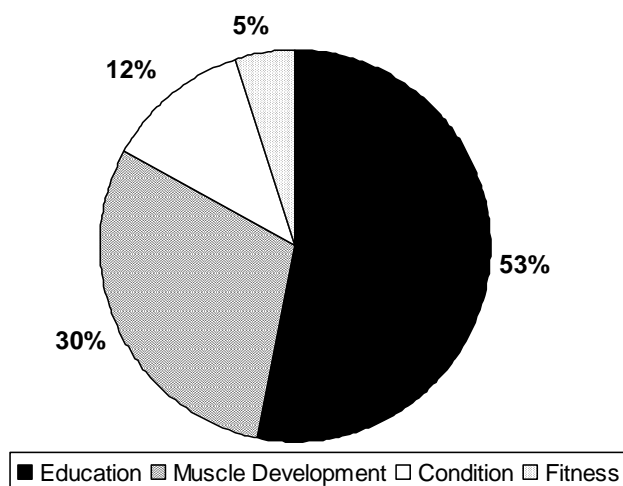


Figure 1: Reasons for giving exercise to yearlings during a sales preparation

References

Bolwell C.F., Rogers C.W., Firth E.C., French N.P. (2010) Management and exercise of Thoroughbred yearlings during preparation for yearling sales in the North Island of New Zealand. *Proceedings of the New Zealand Society of Animal Production*, 70:157-161