

Operation Gelding Program Aims to Reduce the Number of Excess Horses

The Unwanted Horse Coalition's initiative will help launch no-cost or low-cost gelding clinics across the country.

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The Unwanted Horse Coalition [UHC] has initiated Operation Gelding. The new UHC program will provide funds and materials to assist organizations, associations and events that wish to sponsor clinics to which horse owners can bring their stallions to be castrated. A number of associations have sponsored such clinics and the UHC wants to help more organizations, associations and events get involved in this effort.

This initiative is made possible by a special gift from the American Association of Equine Practitioners Foundation [AAEP] and the UHC both organizations have donated seed money to get the program started. Operation Gelding is patterned after several initiatives undertaken by horse associations, organizations and events around the country.

"The Coalition has focused on raising awareness about the unwanted issue for the first few years of its existence. We are now able to start offering some tangible programs that help address the problem. Hopefully this will be the first of many," said David Foley, Executive Director of the AAEP.

The UHC will provide information and forms necessary to conduct a clinic, along with seed money to defray the costs. Funds of \$50 per horse gelded with a \$1,000 maximum will be awarded to groups once a year. Assistance will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis, subject to available resources. Organizations can apply by filling out the Operation Gelding Funding Form provided by the UHC. Funds will be awarded once the clinic is complete and a veterinary statement is provided. Any organization, association or event can participate in the UHC's Operation Gelding program, the UHC wants to involve as many groups as possible.

"The impetus for these clinics is that the castration of a stallion will help prevent overbreeding and produce a gentler horse that is more rideable, more trainable and more saleable, allowing them to be used in several careers," said Dr. Doug Corey, Chairman of the UHC. "With the inauguration of this program, the UHC will become more directly involved in helping horses."

"There are many ways that an organization, association or event can become involved in helping with unwanted horses in addition to Operation Gelding. The UHC's handbook, *Best Practices: How Your Organization Can Help Unwanted Horses*, outlines other activities that organizations, associations and events can undertake to create programs that help horses in need," said Ericka Caslin, director of the UHC. *Best Practices* cites many examples of how organizations and groups can get involved, including gelding clinics. This handbook is available for download at the UHC website or hard copies can be obtained by contacting the UHC.

For more information about Operation Gelding, to receive a packet of information or to apply for funding, please contact UHC director, Ericka Caslin, at ecaslin@horsecouncil.org or 2022964031. Visit the UHC website for additional information, forms, and additional assistance at www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org.