

AVMA endorses AAEP policies on pregnant mare urine collection, racehorse medication

Relying on allied group expertise, the Executive Board, on recommendation of the AVMA Animal Welfare Committee, decided to endorse two policies of the American Association of Equine Practitioners, rather than have separate AVMA positions.

First, the board endorsed the AAEP's position statement on management of horses used in the pregnant mare urine collection industry. Over the past year, the AVMA has received numerous inquiries from veterinarians and the public about the Association's position on this issue. The AVMA has not had a position.

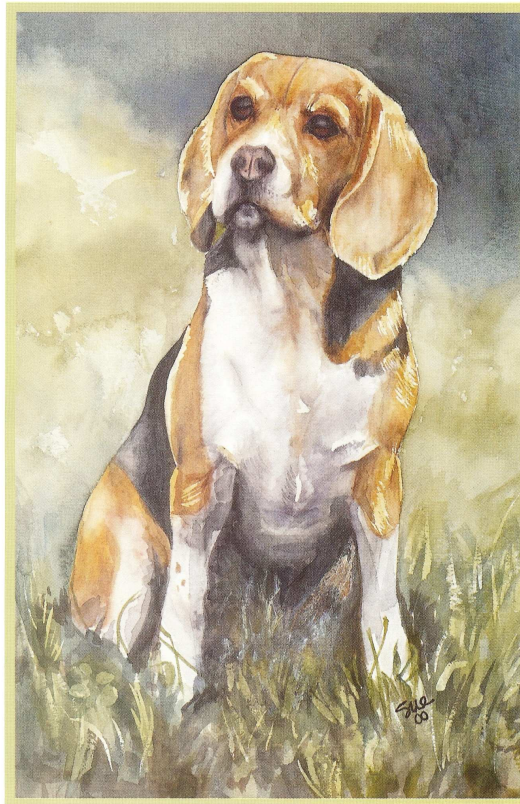
The care of horses used in the PMU collection industry is becoming an important and visible animal welfare issue. Premarin is being used more often to treat incontinence and dermatologic conditions in companion animals. It is also the most prescribed drug for women's hormone replacement.

In considering whether to recommend an AVMA position, the Animal Welfare Committee reviewed extensive reports on PMU ranching and sought the counsel of an international expert in the care of horses used in this industry. Ultimately, committee members decided the most appropriate course of action would be to recommend that the board defer to the AAEP position. They believe it represents current knowledge and is in keeping with good veterinary practice. The AAEP conducted fact-finding missions before developing its position.

The AAEP position, now endorsed by the AVMA, states:

Management of Mares Used in the Pregnant Mare Urine (PMU) Collection Industry

Through on-site investigations and peer review of ongoing research, the American Association of Equine Practi-



tioners believes the collection of urine from pregnant mares and care of their offspring as prescribed by the recommended Code of Practice represents responsible management of horses to produce a commodity for the benefit of mankind that should not result in abuse, neglect, or inhumane treatment of horses.

The board also endorsed the AAEP's policy on medication of racehorses after rescinding the AVMA's position statement on the issue. The former AVMA position had stated that the AVMA opposed the use of drugs to alter the normal racing performance of the horse.

The AAEP's detailed "Policy on Therapeutic Medications in Racehorses" can be found at www.aaep.org.