

Do You Need to Find a New Home for Your Horse?

We often receive calls from people who are struggling in this current economy, requesting that we take their horses because they cannot afford to care for them any longer. In fact, there are so many such calls that it is impossible for all of the rescue organizations and/or the Georgia Department of Agriculture to be able to take them all. Here are some important facts that you should know and some suggested guidelines to follow if you are trying to find a new home for your horse:

1. MAKE A FLYER:

- Make a flyer with good pictures and a description of your horse. Include such things as age, sex, color, breed, and level of training (if any), temperament and any special needs. Be positive, but truthful.
- Child-safe horses are always easy to “rehome”. Is your horse good around kids? Take a picture with children on or near the horse (only if totally safe), and use that picture in your flyer.
- Does your horse have a current official negative Coggins test and is it up to date on vaccines? State this information in your flyer. Note: It is illegal to transport a horse in Georgia without proof of a current official negative Coggins test.

2. MAKE YOUR HORSE MARKETABLE:

- It will be very difficult to find a new home for a horse that you cannot catch. If your horse is untouchable, do something about it. Search the internet and learn how to work with your horse. Be consistent with time spent with your horse.
- Network with friends and family to get help if you are not physically able to work with your horse. We have found that there are knowledgeable people who are willing to help. Ask the folks at your local feed store if they know of anybody who they would recommend.
- Rideable horses will be the easiest to place in new homes. Work with your horse to get them to at least accept a saddle and bridle. If possible, move from there to accepting a rider.

3. ESTABLISH A PRICE:

- Free to a Good Home – Be careful using this method. It often attracts “kill buyers” and people who cannot afford to feed or care for a horse properly.
- Do Not Overprice Your Horse – Things are different now. Don’t count on getting the price you originally paid for your horse. Horse prices are way down and you will probably have to settle for much less than your original purchase price.
- Do not Lose Sight of the Goal – To find your horse a new loving home. Be willing to lower or waive your price if you find the perfect home.

4. ADVERTISE YOUR HORSE:

- Post flyers –Make copies of your flyer and post them on the bulletin boards of your local feed stores, Tractor Supply Company, convenience store, etc.
 - ✓ Distribute your flyer on the internet – there are several “horsey” distribution lists available. Send your flyer to GERL at the email address below and ask that it be circulated. Georgia Equine Rescue League – info@gerlltd.org

- **Advertise – write up a short newspaper ad and advertise in some, or all of these publications:**
 - ✓ **Market Bulletin**
 - ✓ **Craig’s List**
 - ✓ **Your local newspaper**
 - ✓ **Stable Mates**

5. SCREENING POTENTIAL OWNERS:

- **Fact: Most people care about what happens to their pets and want their horses to go to a great new home. How do you ensure that your horse(s) will go to a good home?**
- **Ask Questions! You have a right to know what kind of person or family your horse may potentially be living with. Find out as much information about them as you can in a casual manner by asking some simple questions. Most people will tell you more than you wanted to know if you will just let them talk. Below are examples:**
 - ✓ **Name, address and phone number?**
 - ✓ **Do you have other horses? If so, how long have you had them?**
 - ✓ **Did you grow up with horses?**
 - ✓ **Where do you live?**
 - ✓ **Do you ride? And if so, what kind of riding?**
 - ✓ **Who is your vet? (Name and address or phone number)**
 - ✓ **Would you mind if I drove out to your farm to see where my horse will be living?**

6. PREPARE YOUR PAPERWORK:

- **After you find a new owner for your horse you will need to sign a Release of Ownership or Bill of Sale. This does not have to be anything fancy and should state the following:**
 - ✓ **Date of transfer.**
 - ✓ **Your name and address.**
 - ✓ **Name and address of new owner.**
 - ✓ **Description of the horse including horse’s name, sex, age, color and registration number, if applicable.**
 - ✓ **Amount of money transferred, if applicable.**
- **The original official Coggins test record should be given to the new owner, as well as any vet records reflecting recent vaccinations, date of last farrier visit and other pertinent information.**
- **Sample of current feed – Many horses have delicate digestive systems and drastic changes in their feed can cause colic. If possible, give enough feed for two or three feedings to go with your horse to his/her new home.**