

Dusty prospects

Dust in the equine stable environment

By Janna Hueneke

The Dutch company Hurkyson has developed a new product for the equestrian market: **the dust extractor machine**; a machine that dry cleans bedding and roughage material for horses.

Plan is to launch this product in September 2010, but before they do that, they need to understand their target market better and need to find out if their market approach is appropriate. Therefore the company worked together with a graduate student from Hogeschool Van Hall Larenstein. In the framework of her bachelor thesis, the equine, leisure and sports student Janna Hueneke conducted a market research for the dust extractor machine.

The problem

Former research has shown that respiratory issues are a common problem in horses, and that particles in the stable air can cause these problems (Robinson, 2001; Fleming, 2004; Dannenbrink, 2004). These potentially

Every second horse suffers from airway diseases

harmful particles come apart from the roughage mainly from the bedding material used in the horses stable. As most horses and especially sport horses are being kept in stables for most of the time they are exposed to a potential airway disease inducing environment.

Lower risk for airway diseases through reduction of dust concentrations

With the use of the dust extractor, up to 90% of these potentially harmful particles can be removed and therefore the risk for respiratory disease is significantly reduced.

The research

Due to the fact that the dust extractor is connected to health and well being of the horse, the company Hurkyson is planning to approach the market with the help of veterinarians. The student investigated whether veterinarians are willing to work with Hurkyson and if there is a market for the dust extractor machine. A questionnaire was used to interview the target groups of 20 yard owners and 22 veterinarians.

The results

Results showed that 85% of the interviewed yard owners think that the machine is useful and 50% of the yard owners are interested in the machine. 86% of the interviewed veterinarians think that the machine is useful and 55% would be interested in supporting the introduction of the dust extractor machine.

A clear view

These results suggest that there is a market for the dust extractor machine and that the planned market approach, via veterinarians is appropriate. The company Hurkyson should focus on informing their target groups and raise awareness. Like that more people may see the need for the dust extractor.

The equine market will face a new product offering an improvement or prevention of respiratory issues.

The research provided a snapshot of the target market and possible future supporters of the dust extractor. The product can be placed more appropriately on the market. This information enables Hurkyson to continue the launch of the dust extractor machine as scheduled and enter the market in September 2010.