

## Castration Clinic A Success

A free equine castration clinic was held on Saturday, September 26th at the Washington County Fairgrounds in Lake Elmo, MN. The clinic was sponsored by The Minnesota Horse Welfare Coalition which is made up of members from the Minnesota Horse Council, the Minnesota Animal Humane Society, Equine Rescues, the University of Minnesota, and the Minnesota Association of Equine Practitioners. The clinic is a component of *The Gelding Project* which is designed to reduce the number of unwanted horses in Minnesota.

Eighteen stallions were castrated; including 3 Pintos, 3 American Quarter horses, 4 miniature horses, 2 miniature donkeys, 4 Arabians, 1 Shetland pony, and 1 Peruvian Paso. The stallions ranged in age from 4 months to 19 years old.

In order to participate in the clinic, horse owners had to demonstrate a hardship and needed a referral from a veterinarian, humane agent, or horse rescue. Castrations were performed by 21 University of Minnesota veterinary students while under close supervision by 9 licensed equine veterinarians who donated their time.

The horses came from 8 Minnesota counties. Eighty-two percent of participating owners were female and a majority were over the age of 40. Eighty-two percent of participants owned six or more horses. Twenty-seven percent of participants operated boarding stables, and 90% had access to the internet. Forty-five percent of participants stated they would not have castrated their stallions without the clinic. Sixty-three percent of the participants still had stallions on their property which resulted in both intentional and accidental breedings, showing a need for future castration clinics and educational sessions around the state.

