



PRESS RELEASE

European State Studs Association e.V. (ESSA)

Conference of the European State Studs at the „Versailles of Horses“

Marbach (May 11th, 2011). From May 2nd to 4th the members of the European State Studs Association e.V. (ESSA) met in the French National Stud Le Pin. Thirty studs from 13 countries are part of the European state studs' network. They cooperate in the fields of equine breeding, education, research, marketing, tourism and campaign for the interests of the state studs on an international stage. In times of decreasing financial support, the traditional horse breeding institutions are facing major challenges. Some of them are considered to be closed down, as lately discussed at the Suisse National Stud Avenches.

The National Stud Le Pin is one of the oldest French studs, alongside Pompadour and Rosières-aux-Salines, which also joined ESSA. It was founded in 1715 by Louis XV and with its castle and the majestic stables this stud is considered to be the “Versailles of Horses”.

During a guided tour the participants of the conference learned about the studs' diverse fields of activities. Besides horse breeding, the stud also focuses on education. The equestrian center offers riding and driving courses. Talented young riders are supported by scholarships and receive first class jumping training. Another area of the stud farm is dedicated to education and research in the field or reproduction. In the farriers' and saddlers' workshops, these old professions are taught based on the latest knowledge.

Le Pin offers guided tours for visitors, stallion shows, a very descriptive museum, shop, café and much more. All year round, top breeding and sport events take place. Even horse races on the stud owned track, whose historic stands also served as backdrop of the movie about the life of Coco Chanel. One should mark the calendar for 2014 when Le Pin will host the world championships in eventing.

The conference of the European stud directors was rounded off by a reception in the evening. Philippe de Guénin, general director of the French Institute of Horse and Riding (IFCE), Bertrand Maréchaux, prefect of the department, who is the local representative of the responsible ministry of Sport and Agriculture, and Hubert Christophe representing the General Council of the department of Orne, welcomed the international guests, as well as Laurence Meunier and Frédéric Chauvel, president and director of the French equine cluster. The presentation of Bernard Maurel, president of ESSA, was followed by a stallion performance in the impressive atmosphere of the central courtyard.

Besides the sires from Le Pin, introduced by stud director Franck Le Mestre, stallions from the National Stud of Saint-Lô, which is also located in Normandy, and stallions of private owners were presented. The presented group of horses ranged from established older sires like the famous jumpers JAGUAR MAIL and MILORD CARTHAGO to charming young ones.

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Promising and already successful sport horses impressed the spectators, as well as the representatives of special breeds and draft horses, such as a baroque Lipizzaner, an elegant Nonius, as well as compact Cob Normands and mighty Percherons.

The conference received also strong media interest. Two French TV stations reported about this event in the evening news.

From October 12th to 14th ESSA will be hosting a symposium about European stud culture at the Slovenian National Stud Lipica. The next General Assembly will take place in June 2012 in Romania.

ESSA campaigns for the preservation of the cultural heritage of Europe's state studs. Besides the historic stud premises and cultural landscapes, knowledge, skills and traditions, which were passed on from generation to generation, the living heritage "horse" plays an important role of the studs' cultural significance. Everyone can join the network as supporting member. Detailed information can be found on the website www.europeanstatestuds.org.