



ROYAL AGRICULTURAL  
SOCIETY *of* ENGLAND



### **Equine Obesity Highlighted as Lisa Randle wins RASE Eqvalan Duo® Equine Thesis of the Year Award 2011**

Warwickshire college distance learning student, Lisa Randle has won the coveted Eqvalan Duo ® Equine Thesis of the Year Award 2011, sponsored by Merial and organised by the Royal Agricultural Society of England. Her work highlighted a nationwide problem with equine obesity.

The core purpose of the study was to identify the links between equine body condition score and incidence of health issues. The study even went as far as comparing the body condition score of owners against their horses! The study found an apparent shift towards the more overweight end of the scale in owners' perception of the correct body condition for their animals.

This result would suggest that some owners may not perceive their horse to be overweight or obese. An easier way for owners to assess if their horse is overweight must be made available to ensure steps are taken to manage horse weight, with consequent health benefits.

Lisa said her success was a “dream come true” but she hoped the findings would benefit horse health.

“I hope that wider publicity relating to obesity, insulin resistance and equine metabolic syndrome will enable vets and other equine professionals to help owners more easily manage their horse’s body condition, initiating action where necessary so that the health and welfare of the horse is supported and not compromised.

“I hope my success can give encouragement to other mature students studying for degrees by distance learning. Warwickshire College have given me superb support throughout my studies and have enabled me to achieve my potential. This award shows what can be achieved.”

Lisa beat off competition from four other students, all of whom had to present their thesis to a panel of five judges, made up of Dr Emma Batson (Merial Animal Health), Dr Georgina Crossman (BEFRED), Rachael Conwell (EquiMed Referrals Ltd),

Jan Rogers (Head of Equine Development, British Equestrian Federation) and Rachel Kay (2006 winner).

Rachel Kay said: “The standard of the entries in the award rises every year and we were presented with a varied and interesting range of topics. All the finalists were outstanding and we were particularly impressed with the delivery of the presentations.

“All five finalists spoke very confidently about their work and proved to be informed and knowledgeable about their subject area when questioned. The judges felt that Lisa's findings regarding obesity and health-related matters carried valuable information for the leisure horse industry and we were unanimous that the study deserved to be awarded first place.”

The runner-up was Bill Chapman from Moulton College with his title - “Comparison of the efficacy of preloading versus reloading electrolyte supplementation in novice competition horses.”

The other finalists were Caryl Ffion Marks from Hartpury College, Christine Hills from Writtle College and Eoin O’Brien from the University of Limerick.

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors:-

1. Press release issued by Catherine Stuart, Membership & Communications Executive, Royal Agricultural Society of England

Tel No: 02476 858 252 Email: [catherines@rase.org.uk](mailto:catherines@rase.org.uk)

2. The Royal Agricultural Society of England plays a leading role in the development of British agriculture and a vibrant rural economy through the uptake of good science and the promotion of best practice. [www.rase.org.uk](http://www.rase.org.uk)
3. Merial is the world's leading and most successful animal health company producing a wide range of pharmaceuticals and vaccines to keep livestock and pets healthy and productive.

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