SUMMARY

This work is a result from student works in the course Horses in society and planning given by Departement of Agricultural Biosystems and Technologie during 2004 and 2005. The aim with the course is to make the students able to analyze the situation for horse keeping and horse activities in specific areas, of students own choice, in the landscape, understand how the horse experience the same district, plan for horse keeping and horse activities and to point out positive and negative influence on the environment by the horse.

Contents are
- Tradition and history around horse keeping
- The importance of horses in society
- How does the horse comprehend the surroundings
- Comprehensive planning – the horse and the municipality
- Bridle paths – planning and shaping
- The horse farm in society and landscape
- The importance for biological variety by horse keeping
- Something about constructions for horse keeping, management and influence on the environment

The course is given on internet as "half distance" with two meetings with lectures and excursions. The course followed a plan with several elements which must be treated and reported to the head of the course. The different element could than be combined to a Paper. The papers gives a brief view of the situation for horse keeping and horse activities in different regions in Sweden from Gävle in the north to Lund in the south. Conclusions from 21 Papers made by 27 students, shows that there is a lack of knowledge about the situation for horse activities in the society in Sweden. Engagement differs highly between different communities.

The students find that horses have been kept for many purposes, not only for farming and military activities. Horses' most important work for earlier generations was transport. Even when the railways were built people needed horses for transportation of guts, to and from the railway stations. Another aspect that the student's emphasis is how many words, expressions and name of places, we have in the language that relates to horses. Horses have been very important for our civilisation.

Many students realise that they have believed that their interest for horses was private and special. After their studies they describe it as something common that they share with many others. Therefore it is astonishing that there are so little engagement in many communities for planning for horse keeping and horse activities. Horses is important in many points of view, economical, for sports and recreation and they are also more and more important as grazing animals when cows are more and more concentrated on specialized farms. If you want to preserve the Swedish open landscape with high diversity you must se horses as an obligation, not as a problem. A dialogue between horse owners, community and those who need grazing animals should make the horse a resource for society instead of as so often to day, a problem and argument for conflicts especially in the peri urban areas.