

Written by Katie Tims

It's "graduation" time for 12 horses and four mules – bred, raised and trained by animal science students – that will be auctioned Saturday, June 21, during the 16th annual Horse Production Sale at the University of California – Davis. The auction, coordinated by the students and staff of the UC Davis Animal Science Horse Barn, will feature two weanling, five yearling and five adult horses, as well as three yearling mules and a 2-year-old mule. Complete pedigree information can be viewed at <http://animalscience.ucdavis.edu/horsebarn>. "All of our horses are from champion bloodlines and have impeccable training and handling abilities," said Nicole Webster, horse barn manager. "We've frequently received comments from previous buyers on how well-trained the foals are."

The group will include registered American Quarter Horses, an American Paint horse, warmbloods eligible for registration with the Selle Francais Association and registered mules. A breeding with one of the UC Davis stallions will be auctioned off for the 2009 breeding season. The sale, including a preview of the horses and a barbecue, begins at 3 p.m. The auction starts at 6 p.m.

Detailed descriptions of the horses and the Equine Management Program, as well as driving directions, are available online

at <http://animalscience.ucdavis.edu/horsebarn/ProductionSale/index.htm>. The sale is the culmination of a 6-month internship for the students serving as foal managers. During the internship, the students learn how to handle and train weanlings and yearlings, as well as provide care for the mares and foals before and after birth.

The students also are responsible for fitting the horses for the sale and ensuring that all foals can stand tied, load into a trailer, stand for the farrier, be clipped and work on a hot-walker. The students also have exercised the horses regularly and exposed the foals to a variety of activities including large crowds, heavy equipment and the show ring. In addition, the students have coordinated details for the sale, including production of the sale catalog, which requires that they research and create the pedigree for each horse, compile performance records and prepare photographs.

Proceeds from the sale, which traditionally generates \$20,000 to \$30,000, support the animal science department's Equine Management Program. This program provides hands-on experience for students preparing for careers in the horse industry or for further studies in veterinary medicine or graduate school. Contributing to this event with their time, talents and support are Nutrena, auctioneer Dan Macon, Brenda's Tack Warehouse of Woodland and Western Ranch Feed Store of Vacaville.

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