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TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL HERD AND PASTURE HORSE BREEDING TO AN INDUSTRIALIZED SYSTEM IN UZBEKISTAN: A HISTORICO-TECHNOLOGICAL ANALYSIS (1980–1990)

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Abstract: This work is devoted to a historical and technological analysis of the development of horse breeding in Uzbekistan in the 1980s and 1990s. The study examines the process of transition to a systematic approach to state planning of the network, reinforced by the VNTP 9-83 (TLM 9-83) standards. The article details the feeding methods of different groups of horses: from working and heavy-duty horses to elite sports breeds. Based on the research conducted, it can be concluded that the 1980s and 1990s were the most important stages in the institutionalization of horse breeding in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Horse breeding, pasture, watering, feeding, working, sports, draft horses, farms, milk, livestock.

Introduction: Since the emergence of the world, countless wise people have lived, and all of them have given their own evaluation of the horse. For many centuries, the horse has been considered one of the most important assets in warfare. It is not without reason that films have been made and books have been written about it. Therefore, many proverbs and sayings have been created about the horse's diligence, loyalty to humans, and empathy, and numerous works of sculpture have been produced.

Horse breeding is an important branch of livestock farming. Horses are used in agriculture, sports activities, border troops, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and in underground mines as a labor force, as well as for obtaining various products. In the national economy, more than 2.2 million horses are used, which is equivalent to 150,000 tractors with a power of 15 horsepower each.

According to statistical data, before World War II there were about 90 million horses in the world. By 1980, this number had decreased to 66 million worldwide, with 89,000 horses in Uzbekistan. At present, there are more than 250,000 horses in Uzbekistan.[1] Horses are kept both in stables and on pastures, raised in herds; in stables they are housed in individual stalls, tie-stalls, or in groups. Working horses are tied in separate stalls, while breeding stallions, mares with foals, and racing sport horses are kept in special box stalls.

Horse-breeding farms were classified under TLM 9-83 and, depending on the farm's specialization, were divided into breeding, working, and commercial farms. In breeding farms, stables were built to accommodate 20, 40, 60, 80, or 120 mares. On pastures, groups of 100, 200, or up to 300 mares were grazed together.

Commercial farms intended for meat production were designed for 150–900 horses, while farms producing kumis (fermented mare's milk) were designed for 50–150 horses. If a stable in a breeding farm was built for 40 horses, it housed mares, stallions, and gelding[2].

In stables built for working horses, in addition to the above-mentioned facilities, there must also be tie-stalls, a workshop for repairing saddles and harnesses, and a farriery (horseshoeing)

[1] Xolmirzaev E. «Yilqichilik», Toshkent, «Mexnat», 1990.-b.20

[2] Turdiyev A.K., Islomov G'.P., Kulmanov B.P. Zoogigiyena va chorvachilik binolarini loyihalash: o'quv-uslubiy majmua. – Samarqand: Samarqand davlat veterinariya meditsinasi, chorvachilik va biotexnologiyalar universiteti, 2025. – B. 104.

area. In commercial farms intended for kumis production, a milking room is provided. Buildings designed for keeping young breeding foals include box stalls, a manege (for saddling), training and conditioning areas, shower rooms, as well as separate sections for individual and group housing.

On pastures, 0.3–0.5 hectares of land are allocated per horse and, if possible, enclosed with fences. Shelters are built to protect horses from wind and unfavorable weather conditions, and these are equipped with feeding troughs. All types of horse-breeding farms include veterinary units, weighing areas, watering facilities, blacksmith workshops, saddle and harness repair shops, feed storage facilities, manure storage, administrative offices, and utility rooms. Buildings constructed for young foals are designed to be higher than ordinary stables, positioned against prevailing winds, and built in a modern style.

Stables and their internal equipment must comply with the technological design standards (TLM 9-83). TLM 9-83 (full name: VNTP 9-83) is a historical document developed in the 1980s to modernize and standardize horse breeding. Its background and significance can be understood in several stages.

By the early 1980s, horse breeding in the former Soviet Union had gained importance not only in agriculture but also in sports and export (particularly of pedigree horses). These standards were approved on April 12, 1983, by the USSR Ministry of Agriculture and came into force on January 1, 1984. The document was developed by the "State Design Institute" (TsNIIEPovtseprom) with the participation of specialists from the "All-Union Research Institute of Horse Breeding" (VNIIK).

Before the adoption of TLM 9-83, older standards known as NTP-SX.9-66 (from 1966) were in use. The 1983 version introduced stricter and more scientifically grounded requirements for horse housing technology. In particular, the dimensions of stalls were clearly differentiated depending on the type of horse (racing, draft, or local breeds). This document marked the transition in horse breeding from an "amateur" approach to an "industrial" one. For the first time, unified standards were established for stable height, window area, and ventilation systems. Many state horse farms and older facilities in Uzbekistan were built according to these standards, and even modern designs often rely on these basic measurements.

Stables were mainly constructed in the shape of the letters G and P, with stalls and box stalls arranged in two rows. Between them, a 2.6–3 meter-wide passage for feed and manure was provided, along which horses were managed according to plan.

Working horses performing heavy labor are given rest periods of 1–1.5 hours in the morning, 2–3 hours during the day, and 1–1.5 hours in the evening. Corn, sunflower, and silage are considered among the best feeds for horses in America. After work, horses are allowed to rest so their muscles can relax. If a horse is watered 30–40 minutes before the end of work, it will eat with a good appetite. However, if it is watered immediately after feeding, the grain (barley, oats, rye) may swell and ferment, which can cause digestive problems such as bloating or vomiting.

The highest milk productivity of mares is observed between the ages of 7 and 12. Milk quality depends on pasture conditions, feed preparation technology, and nutritional value. Moldy, rotten, foul-smelling, or toxic plants and feeds must never be given. Watering horses in hot weather may lead to hoof pain or rheumatic inflammation. After work, horses should rest to allow muscle relaxation. Once the horse has cooled down, it should be given half a bucket of water after about 30 minutes, and then, after another half hour, as much water as it wants. If watered during work, the horse can immediately continue working. Therefore, watering should be done either 40–50 minutes before feeding or about 2 hours after feeding.[3]

[3] Turdiyev A.K., Islomov G'.P., Kulmanov B.P. Zoogigiyena va chorvachilik binolarini loyihalash: o'quv-uslubiy majmua. – Samarqand: Samarqand davlat veterinariya meditsinasi, chorvachilik va biotexnologiyalar universiteti, 2025. – B. 105.

Foals suckle their mothers 20–30 times a day, so they should not be separated from them for long periods, and mares harnessed to carts should not be driven too fast. If foals are weaned too early, they do not develop properly. Foals of working mares are weaned at 5–6 months of age, while those of breeding mares are weaned at about 8 months. Male foals are kept two per box stall and are gradually trained to grooming, cleaning, hoof care, and to wearing a halter and bridle. They are also taken out daily for exercise. Movement in the open air promotes growth, strengthens bones, and increases resistance to various diseases. The daily feed ration should include legume and grain hay, haylage, carrots, and other nutritious feed components.[4]

From the age of two, young horses are gradually trained to wear a halter, saddle and harness, as well as to walking, carrying light loads, and other basic tasks. Preparing them into well-trained horses largely depends on the trainer's knowledge and experience, consistent and repeated training, patience, affection toward the horse, the ability to discipline or reward when necessary, and the skill to handle the horse according to its temperament.

Maintaining the health of horses and increasing their work efficiency requires proper use of them as a labor force. The workload should be assigned according to the horse's strength. Horses should not be overworked, as this reduces productivity and can lead to various diseases. Horses reach full strength at the age of 4–5 years[5].

Horse tack includes a bridle, collar, saddle, girth, stirrup, restraining strap, crupper strap, breast strap, crupper chain, throatlatch, ear strap, hobble, cover, throat strap, traces, and other related equipment. These items must be properly fitted to each individual horse according to its size. Such equipment facilitates control, use, and riding of horses, and also increases their pulling power. Proper attention to horses in this way has contributed to the development of horse breeding in Uzbekistan.

Conclusion: Based on the conducted research, it can be concluded that the 1980–1990s were the most important stage in the institutionalization of horse breeding in Uzbekistan. The main outcomes of this period include the implementation of unified technical standards (TLM 9-83), which made it possible to establish model horse-breeding farms across the republic with optimal microclimate conditions and mechanized feeding and watering processes. This, in turn, significantly reduced the mortality rate of young animals.

During this decade, the horse-breeding industry of Uzbekistan firmly established itself as a strategic sector integrating agriculture, sports, and medicine. Improving the qualifications of workers, developing the craftsmanship of producing equipment (such as saddles and bridles), and applying a scientific approach to breeding helped preserve the unique gene pool of national horse breeds. The foundation created at the end of the 20th century has served as the basis for the modern revival of equestrian sports and tourism.

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