

## Rare Caspian Horses Back From Brink Of Extinction

There are only 900 Caspian horses left worldwide but the breed, which is often described as a "pony-sized Arabian," is quickly being re-vitalized in the U.S., thanks to breeding programs that began in 1995. With 450 head as of 2004, American-bred Caspians account for about half of all Caspians in the world outside of their native Iran.

"Horses of this breed are exquisitely refined and elegant," says Austin, Texas breeder Francie Stull, of Kristull Ranch. She and her husband, Chuck, have just over 100 Caspians, making their herd the largest in the world.

"They have a delicate head with the classic dished-face, protruding eyes and wide flaring nostrils," according to Stull. "Caspian horses also have a pronounced forehead, short ears and a slim and graceful neck. They glide past with a floating action, head and tail held high - poetry in motion."

Stull asserts that the Caspian is a horse, not a pony, because of its perfect proportions and gaits, although it stands only 10 to 12 1/2 hands high. A photo of a Caspian without a person standing beside the horse for perspective, gives the illusion of a much larger Thoroughbred or Arabian, she says.

The main colors are chestnut, bay and gray. Occasionally, a black or buckskin color may appear. Some Caspians carry a dorsal stripe.



**Their small size make Caspians ideal for children.**

Known for their agility, Caspians make superb jumpers. Their size makes them especially suited for children.

"They have great intelligence and courage, and learn very quickly," Stull says.

Caspian horses bring high prices because of their rarity. Generally, a young filly will sell for between \$4,000 and \$5,000. Colts range from \$1,500 to \$2,000 and proven brood mares sell for \$15,000 to \$20,000, depending on quality.



**Only 450 Caspians exist in the U.S. Unlike many ponies, they have the look and style of a full-sized horse.**

Before they can be registered, every Caspian is DNA tested and microchipped.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Kristull Ranch, Chuck and Francie Stull, 8708 Grelle Lane, Austin, Texas 78744 (ph 800 658-6699 or 512 280-1880; email: chuck@Kristull.com; website: www.caspian

horse.com); or The Caspian Horse Society of the Americas, Misty Acton, Registrar, 6109 FM 390 North Brenham, Texas 77833 (ph 979 830-9046 or 979 830-1566; email: chsaregistrar@aol.com; website: www.caspian.org).



**"Grapples" look like regular apples but when you bite into them, they're all grape.**

## These Apples Taste Like Grapes

When Gary Snyder conducted a taste test of his new grape-flavored apple - called a "Grapple" - he didn't know what to expect.

"The response was overwhelming. About 85 percent of the people who have tried a Grapple say they're fantastic," he says. "A high percentage tell us it's the best apple they've ever eaten. Some who say they don't like apples love the Grapple."

Response was so amazing Snyder went right into production, selling 1.3 million lbs. the first year. This year the makers of the Grapple expect to sell 10 times that amount.

Snyder's patented process turns a Fuji or Gala apple into a Grapple. It takes about a week to infuse the apples with grape flavoring.

One of the keys to the Grapple's success is the quality control the Snyder family puts into their product. Apples are pre-sorted and pre-sized to find ones that have just the right sugar and pressure levels and fit the company's

clear plastic clamshell 4-pack. After the pre-selected apples go through their bath, they are graded again. At this stage, anywhere from 10 to 30 percent of the now flavored apples will be removed and sent to food shelves. The rest are packed, shipped and sold. Retail price on the apple packs run from \$5 to \$7.

Whole Grapples are just the start for Snyder. He is already testing sliced flavored apples and thinks flavored pears could be around the corner. Right now the Snyders are busy securing a supply of premium apples. Other orchards are reaping the benefit of the new demand, which is much greater than the Snyder family's orchard can handle.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gary Snyder, C & O Nursery, P.O. Box 116, Wenatchee, Wash. 98807 (ph 509 662-7164 or 800 232-2636; website: www.conursery.com).



**Built from an MTD, this "slow-kart" was painted to look like a Deere.**

## Slow-Karts Go Slow...And Safe

When Jack Zembower's kids wanted a go-kart, he was concerned about safety. So he came up with what he called a "slow-kart." They were so popular, his grandchildren are still using and enjoying them a generation later.

"With go-karts, you almost need a track to use them safely," explains Zembower. "I just took riding lawn mowers apart and rebuilt them."

What he ended up with was two rigs. One looks somewhat like a Deere garden tractor while the other looks more like a go-kart. The Deere Slow-kart was actually built from an MTD mower. The frame was chopped and extended, and the seat was moved back and down.

On the other slow-kart, he moved the seat right onto the mower platform, ahead of the engine.

He wired both carts for 12-volt and equipped them with electric starters, 8 hp Briggs & Stratton engines and deadman clutches.

The Deere kart is equipped with headlights crafted from a set of NAPA backup lights. It has a 3-speed transmission with reverse and a throttle.

The orange kart has a combined clutch/throttle. To start it moving, the operator depresses the clutch. The farther in it is pushed, the faster the kart moves.

"The deadman clutches have to be depressed for the slow-karts to move," explains Zembower. "That way the carts stop moving if a young driver falls off."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jack Zembower, 437 McClain Rd., Enin Valley, Penn. 16120 (ph 330 549-3605 or 724 336-5380).



**Both "slow-karts" have deadman clutches so if the driver falls off, they stop moving.**