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Price of donkeys drops by half as economic woes bite, reports finds

DONKEYS have dropped in price by almost 50% in the past two years as many consider them to be luxury items in the current economic climate.

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KERRIE KENNEDY

According to the Buy and Sell Index report out this week, while livestock prices have continued to rise, the price of a horse has suffered a huge drop while the price of donkeys has fallen through the floor.

Marketing manager/ farming specialist at Buy and Sell, Adam Ferguson said that while farmers are used to taking care of their livestock, horses and donkeys were bought at the height of the Celtic tiger as a status symbol by the newly rich.

“It seems like the humble donkey has gone the same way as other luxury items in the recession.

“If you take it that the average price of a two-year old Mercedes in 2006 was €30,100 and in 2011 it is €18,027 and look at the price of a donkey in 2006 of €806 and in 2011 of €455.07, you can see that the price in both luxury items has almost halved.

“For the donkey the issue is serious as they can’t be put up on blocks and left until the economy improves. Their maintenance is proving to be more than owners can afford in these turbulent times.”

Equine calls to the ISPCA animal cruelty helpline are reported to have tripled since 2008, with over 2,000 cases reported in 2010 and the pattern of calls in the first months of this year indicate that this figure will be exceeded in 2011.

The report also found that farmers in the livestock sector are moving online in greater numbers than before, indicating that farmers are adopting new methods to promote and sell their produce outside of traditional markets.

Buy and Sell general manager Colm McCann said he has seen an interesting rise in the offers of livestock.

“Beef and dairy cattle, pigs, and sheep have all begun to appear within the Buy & Sell pages since June 2010. While they were on offer before on BuyandSell.ie, they are present in much greater numbers.

“Farmers who were interested in machinery moved online quickly, but it seems livestock farmers are now following suit and see the online world as a valid space for doing business,” he added.

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