

## Change or End of Career



Many horses enjoy more than one career in their lifetime such as a racehorse becoming a competitive eventer or a show horse enjoying a more laid back career as a lesson horse. The measures taken to reduce wear and tear in their debut to the working world significantly impacts their usefulness and quality of life in later years. Repetitive strain and speed early on in a horse's life can lead to musculoskeletal problems. Untreated osteochondritis can lead to long-term arthritis in the joint. Implementing best practices in stable management reduces the chances of gastro-intestinal problems and disease. Gaining a well-rounded education before becoming a horse owner will help eliminate the pitfalls of trial and error that can ultimately cut short the career of a horse. Care taken right from the start and throughout the lifetime of the horse can extend the years of performance and increase the options for second and third careers.

The Code of Practice provides clear requirements for the welfare of the horse to be of paramount importance when making change or end of career decisions and provides a helpful list of options based on their physical condition, soundness, temperament and other considerations. It is important that the horse is transitioned to a responsible caregiver. Requesting references and a site visit are methods to help ascertain this information. Having a veterinarian examine the horse, looking for any conditions and identifying acceptable uses is recommended and is the best way to determine future care needs and long-term welfare.

It is part of every horse owners' full circle of responsibility to act in the best interests for the welfare of the horse. Equine Guelph provides online offerings on the topics of Functional Anatomy, Exercise Physiology, Nutrition and more to help horse owners give their horses the best possible care. A PDF is available on our site for [Managing Equine Athletes into their Second Career](#) as well as an interesting article interviewing international eventer Jessica Phoenix and her story on transitioning horses from [Racetrack to Ribbons](#).

Learn more about the Equine Code of Practice – visit – [Change or End of Career](#)

Learn more about the Equine Code of Practice by taking part in our [new Code Decoder tool](#), which helps you learn about the requirements and to take part in a self-assessment.

Sign up for our [free e-newsletter](#) which will deliver monthly welfare tips throughout 2015 and announce tools to aid all horse owners in carrying out their 'Full-Circle-Responsibility' to our beloved horses.



Stay tuned to learn about Euthanasia in the November e-news and check out the learning opportunities offered by Equine Guelph's [online education program](#).

In partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Equine Guelph is developing a 'Full-Circle-Responsibility' equine welfare educational initiative which stands to benefit the welfare of horses in both the racing and non- racing sectors.