

UNIVERSITY OF
GUELPH
Equine Guelph



Annual Report
May 1, 2025 – April 30, 2026

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Executive Summary

When a group of individuals from the horse industry discussed some needs for the future, the concept of Equine Guelph was born. In 2003, this group of individuals from the horse industry, the Ontario Veterinary Colleges and representatives from industry groups came together to build a vision was to develop a formalized Centre. That was the first step in developing Equine Guelph. In July, 2003, Equine Guelph officially opened and was formally recognized by the University of Guelph as the “Centre for the horse owner at the University of Guelph”. For over two decades, the centre has stayed the course of its industry-given mandate to support health, welfare and safety of the horse. In the last few years there has been great growth and development of its programs for Research, Education and Communications to the industry, thanks to the support of the industry groups, sponsors, partners and as importantly, our donors who make this progress possible.

Research funding was received from Horseman’s Benevolent and Protective Association (\$65,000), Horse Improvement Program/Quarter Racing (\$125,000), E.P. Taylor (\$105,606), donations (\$10,565) and our new funding source, the Donna Moore Estate for Research (\$124,889) for a total of \$431,060, a significant increase from the previous year. Because of this increase, fourteen new projects were accepted for funding on priority-designated topics for new and continuing (20) projects, covering investigations into many priority issues for the horse industry and the health of its horses. The ask for funding continues to exceed the current funding – a demonstration of the need for the ongoing EG research funding program for this investment on behalf of the industry and moving the knowledge forward. Researchers, veterinarians, future vets, business owners and horse owners all benefit from the development of new and specialist knowledge, techniques and management of the horse – always in pursuit of the “evidence-based/welfare-based” goal of our industry – a growing movement in Canada and globally.

In turn, this new knowledge is shared through the expanding Communications Program to share new findings to the partners and all members of our industry at home and globally through the development of the popular researcher interviews, fact sheets, and practical tools for horse owners. From the beginning, this information continues to be freely distributed to our industry partners, and a growing number of our communications are being picked up and further distributed through a large number of media outlets and social media channels our Canadian audience and a growing international following.

Each year there is expansion of the Education program, and this continues in 2025-26 in many areas of programming with new courses on TheHorsePortal.ca. In partnership with Dr. Shane Bateman, the Veterinary Forensics webinar was offered to equine veterinarians and the third year of the Ontario Equine Education and Employment Program (OEEEP) continued to provide pathways into the industry with 4 new cohorts. The three-way partnership with VPI Employment Services and the Ontario Harness Horse Association provided pathways into the horse industry and helped provide new employees for the industry the Ontario Government Skilled Trades program.

The development of TheHorsePortal.ca in 2015 was a great step forward and this program continues to expand its offerings and partnerships and brings new students to our learning community. The courses are reviewed annually and updated with current research findings and its application to support horse welfare. TheHorsePortal.ca attracts new and experienced horse owners to our program which offered 21 courses this year! EG now offers a variety of new on-demand and instructor-led offerings. Our newest racing-exclusive course, *Conditioning the Racehorse* was a huge success, drawing 160 students – and was instructed by Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame member Dr. Ian Moore! *Sport Horse Lameness/Injury Prevention & Care* was offered for free as part of World Horse Day Celebrations and saw an impressive 170 registrations. Three new on-demand courses – *Horse Care & Welfare*, *Sickness Prevention in Horses*, and *Large Animal Emergency Rescue Awareness Level* – were added to the Horse Portal repertoire, giving students the opportunity to learn about these critical subjects throughout the year.

Our first online course was developed in 2000, and launched in May 2002 and was a very new concept for the education sector. Since then, the world of online learning has become a way of life and our programs for short courses, on-demand courses and longer 12-week in-depth courses for the 3 Certificates (Equine Science, Business and Welfare) and the Equine Studies Diploma continue to be updated/developed with new research and covering global developments in welfare.

Exciting things are happening for our youth, as EG builds the “EquiMania! U” program with online “mini-modules” to attract young learners. Along with our award-winning travelling program of interactive youth exhibits, we are encouraging life-long learning for promoting health, welfare and safety of horses and their caretakers.

Funding from Grand River Agricultural Society continues to support a busy schedule for offerings of the Large Animal Emergency Rescue Training for first responders, veterinarians and horse owners, as many groups are placing a higher priority on this training.

Since 2003, EG continues to be a meeting place for provincial and national equine organizations drawn from both the racing and non-racing sectors at the University of Guelph. The regular meetings provide many opportunities to support the two-way communication between industry and University about research priorities, changing industry developments and input into research and education priorities.

The staff of EG and the many equine researchers of the university sincerely appreciate the support and financial input from the funding groups and donors. This past year, annual funding continues to be received from the E.P. Taylor Fund, HIP/TIP funds, Ontario Racing and the Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association of Ontario (HBPA). EG is very fortunate to gratefully receive ongoing support from our dedicated donors and endowments – specifically, the Estate of Donna Moore and the new Deborah Juhnke Fund.

Further information for the research programs, including publications and national/international speaking engagements, are detailed in the Appendices. We would like to draw your attention to the level of equine research achieved and the publications, conference presentations and contributions to the communications and education programs because of this important partnership.

The ongoing support of our Council partners - Equestrian Canada, the Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association of Ontario, Ontario Equestrian, the Ontario Harness Horse Association, Standardbred Canada, the Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario Inc., Ontario Association of Equine Practitioners, the University of Guelph and Ontario Racing (which includes Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society, Central Ontario Standardbred Association and Standardbred Breeders of Ontario Association) - makes this possible for EG to develop and share these programs with the equine industry throughout Ontario, Canada and the growing international audience and this is sincerely appreciated for their financial support but also for the many ways of support and input as contributions to our programs.

Dear Partners and Supporters,

Equine Guelph now marks its 22nd year since being formally recognized as the Centre for the Horse Industry at the University of Guelph in July 2003. Starting as a very small group, with the support of our industry partners we continue to look for 'gaps' in service to our industry and identify industry priorities for our focus of development. We stay steadfast in our ongoing commitment to advance health, welfare and safety in our industry and that remains at the heart of everything we do.



Equine Guelph is guided by feedback from our Council Committees, students, and industry stakeholders, Equine Guelph actively identifies service gaps and responds with targeted programming. Our Research Committee, composed of funding partners, meets annually to review emerging priorities and allocate funding to new and ongoing projects. Similarly, input on our Education and Communications programs helps us adapt and innovate to meet the evolving needs of the equine community.

The importance of the industry investment in equine research and the involvement in reviewing the proposals is a priority for a healthy research program that provides tangible benefits back to the industry. Through this structure, industry priorities are brought to the table, so that priority areas can be subject to research. This process pays further dividends as this involves further training and education of OVC specialists, students, and practicing veterinarians out in the field. The research program has also developed projects for exploring new areas of focus and techniques and in some cases has attracted further funding from other sources to continue or expand the work, which in turn maximizes the industry investment.

Thanks to the continued commitment of our partners, Equine Guelph funded fourteen new research projects this year.

As Co-Chairs, we extend our heartfelt thanks for over 20 years of support from our industry partners as this ongoing investment helps to move the research program growing and the resulting return to the industry for enhanced health and welfare of the horses.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Wichtel'.

Dr. Jeffrey Wichtel
Dean, Ontario Veterinary College

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Patterson'.

Mr. Al Patterson
Co-Chair, Equine Guelph

Introduction

“The Centre for the horse owner at the University of Guelph” -- Equine Guelph, founded in 2003, was developed to create a unique partnership with the University of Guelph.

The original vision of the industry partners was the development of an entity at the Uof G that would be a “Portal” for two-way communication for the horse industry and the U of G for all equine-related research and information in support of the industry. Research was needed to focus on “real-life” problems and priorities faced by the industry. Education programming would support those wanting to come into the industry and for those wanting to continue to enhance their knowledge. The communications program would serve both of those needs and send out information to the industry as part of this cycle of knowledge generation and dissemination. This is at the heart of our mandate to support the health, welfare and safety of our horses and the people working in our industry and continues and grows with each passing year with new and improved programming.

Equine Guelph works closely with the Advisory Council, the Research Committee and industry partners and sponsors. This model provides opportunities for the industry to have direct input for development of future priorities and to focus on current changes in the industry. This two-way communication and partnership have served well since the formation of Equine Guelph in 2003. This report provides information on the development of these programs and demonstrates the ongoing value of the Equine Guelph-Industry partnership for Ontario and throughout Canada.

The Advisory Council of Equine Guelph currently represents Equestrian Canada, The Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association of Ontario, Ontario Equestrian, Ontario Racing, Ontario Harness Horse Association, Standardbred Canada, Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario Inc., Central Ontario Standardbred Association, Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society, Standardbred Breeders of Ontario Association along with members from the University of Guelph. Annual revenue from the E.P. Taylor Equine Research Fund, created by the racing industry and now overseen by the U of G, continues to provide annual support for the research program.

The Dean of OVC, Dr. Jeff Wichtel, (representing U of G), and Mr. Al Patterson (representing industry), continue their roles as Co-Chairs of the Advisory Council and helps to contribute to developing programs of Equine Guelph in a way that serves the industry needs and priorities for the Research, Education and Communications programs.

This Annual Report for the 2025-2026 fiscal year highlights progress, achievements and challenges of Equine Guelph and its programs in service to the equine industry throughout the province and across Canada.

Programs of Equine Guelph

Research

The research program overseen by Equine Guelph and the Research Committee (composed of appointed industry representatives) is an industry-supported program to address identified industry priorities for health and welfare. An important aspect of this program at Guelph is that this funding can help provide a start for new researchers and small pilot programs that show promise for identifying important areas of research. Through an annual call for proposals to U of G equine researchers, this leads to the detailed assessment of the quality of the proposal and its merit relative to identified industry priorities and external review for scientific merit and scored.

Research findings are reported back to the funding groups, and the researchers are available to present their research to these industry boards to help extend this knowledge to their membership. The annual cycle for funding and review of proposals ensures that the industry is part of the decision-making process for allocation of funding and that researchers are reporting back to the funding organizations. There is further distribution of the findings along with the practical application of the knowledge to horse owners and caretakers through the extensive communications program of Equine Guelph and the various educational programs on offer.

We continue to receive proposals for funding that are deemed fundable for their merit and application for the industry by the Research Committee. Unfortunately, these worthwhile projects remain unfunded due to funding limitations.

Research funding allocated was \$481,998 for research projects for 2025-2026. Fourteen new projects were accepted for funding. This is double from the previous year! Projects focused on priority-designated topics including arthritis, fluid therapy, arthroscopy, and West Nile Virus forecasting. This year, a broader range of project topics was considered for funding through the Estate for Donna Moore Endowment, which supported four proposals aligned with the Endowment's mandate to promote research in equine welfare and education. There are also 20 continuing projects that have received their funding in full and whose researchers will be updating the Research Committee with their progress in Fall 2026.

Detailed information on those studies is found in the Research Projects for 2025-26 in the Appendices including the lay summaries and their application to the industry priorities.

The strength of the Equine Guelph Research program stems from the industry partners and experts who spend many hours reviewing the proposals from researchers and assessing them for industry application on priority areas. We thank them for their dedication to this process. And this process is further strengthened by the Council Partners who allocate annual funding to this important program and are assured that their investment into research is well used with return to the industry. Researchers have been very successful at leveraging this funding to bring in further funding from other, larger agencies, so this enhances the annual industry investment.

For the “next step” of the Research program, there is extensive communications back to the industry in the form of press releases, interviews, information sheets, videos and research stories that are disseminated through EG’s communications but also through a growing number of other media outlets that pick up these stories and distribute them throughout Canada and beyond in support of horse health and welfare.

The funding received by the following groups is greatly appreciated - HBPA, the E.P. Taylor Research Fund, Ontario Racing (Horse Improvement Fund), the Estate of Donna Moore, as well as from donations from dedicated individuals who want to be supportive of ongoing research.

Dr. Thomas Koch continued in his role as Co-chair of the Research Committee for 2024-2025 and we thank him for his leadership and contributions to this Committee. All funding partners are encouraged to reach out and organize researcher presentations to their members at meetings, so this helps to further disseminate the information and allows industry participants to join the conversations.

Education and Training

The equine industry continues to be under scrutiny and requires active participation from various stakeholders to maintain its Social License to Operate. Equine Guelph has focused on education as a primary mandate from its inception. In May 2002, Management of the Equine Environment, the very first course online for continuing education at the U of G, was launched, making Equine Guelph a pioneer in equine online education. Through partnership with the School of Continuing Studies (formerly OpenEd), 19 equine-specific courses are offered in a 12-week format. A total of 587 students enrolled in these courses across the Summer 2025 through Winter 2026 semesters.

Equine Guelph Education and Training programs focus on evidence based/welfare-based knowledge mobilization to the horse industry. Equine Guelph prioritizes respectful, informed discussions regarding traditional vs new science-based approaches for horse care and handling. Courses are regularly updated with novel research findings from the University of Guelph and other research institutions.

Over the last 20 years, we have seen many changes in the public and the views on Social License to Operate in our industry, with a growing concern about welfare of the horses when used in various sports. The education and training programs help support our horse industry by providing up-to-date research-based and evidence-based information with practical application at all levels. The many courses and programs offered now by EG provide a range of offerings for all ages and levels of involvement in the horse industry – from youth to adult and all levels from beginner to long-time participant. Of concern is the reported lack of young people going into the equine industry and that underscores the need for development of programs like EquiMania! - a program that takes out hands-on learning opportunities to the industry as well as a growing number of youth courses on TheHorsePortal.ca.

Education continues to be a priority identified by our industry. Through innovation in online course development, we continue to develop approaches for online, accessible learning for multiple levels and areas of special interest as we are doing for the Racing-focused courses with the support of our racing partners and this includes bringing in well-known racing participants who generously share their knowledge with our students. Bringing new knowledge to our industry in practical and applied pathways helps our industry support horse welfare and EG has been a pioneer in the online education field since 2002 with our first course, Management of the Equine Environment, and again in 2015 with the development of our suite of courses on TheHorsePortal.ca. This continues as we develop more youth courses as part of our EquiMania! U program with the development of mini-modules for youth 10-14 years of age.

The Horse Portal continues to develop new short courses (currently 21 public courses on offer) with support from our racing partners and donors. New courses from the past year include three new on-demand courses (Horse Care & Welfare; Sickness Prevention in Horses; Large Animal Emergency Rescue Awareness Level), and a new racing-exclusive course – Conditioning the Racehorse.

There were 587 registrations in our courses in 2025-2026, from 18 different countries and the program attracted over 189 new students for our Certificate and Diploma courses.

"Equine Studies delivers exceptional programming focused on equine health, management, and welfare through an evidence-based approach. While students often describe the program as challenging, they equally emphasize how fulfilling and rewarding their experience has been. Instructors in the Equine Studies program are experts in their field and renowned for their extensive knowledge, dedication, and passion for equine health and management." Quote from Jill Ferguson, Manager, Program Development, School of Continuing Studies | University of Guelph

EquiMania!

Kids love horses and EquiMania! Is the program to entice to learn more! EquiMania! includes interactive displays and educational content directed towards youth and those interested in the equine industry. It focuses on best practices, safety, welfare, and careers within the equine industry. It engages audiences at community events to help deliver hands-on content and educate the next generation of horse enthusiasts. EquiMania! relies on its many dedicated volunteers to assist with event operations and delivery. Consistent positive feedback from event organizers and visitors demonstrates the value of continuing this aspect of Equine Guelph's programming.

Key events attended from May 2025 – April 2026 included:

- Horse Capades: Aug 3-14
- Grand River Industry Day: Aug 4
- Minnesota State Fair: Aug 21 – Sept 1
- AgScape Career Competition: Nov 26 – 27, 2025

EquiMania! is dynamic and continues to evolve as equine care and management practices change. It is committed to ensuring that learning remains fun, accessible, and impactful.

EquiMania! Now offers two on-demand online youth courses:

- “Horse Behaviour and Safety”
- “Careers in the Horse World”

Ongoing development of more EquiMania! courses is continuing throughout 2026 and planned for launch in 2027. Equine Guelph has partnered with the University of Guelph Bachelor of Bioresource Management Program to involve undergraduate students in course content development. This initiative has been highly successful and resulted in fresh, applicable content for our youth.

EquiMania! is funded through tuition fees, endowments, workshops, and corporate sponsorships. This is invested into the development of new initiatives, the enhancement of ongoing programs, and the delivery of online education, virtual presentations, and webinars.

EquiMania! U program update

We are pleased to report that we are producing nine modules on the Horse Portal. Seven more courses in progress. The modules are divided into Levels 1, 2, and 3:

- Level 1 – Introductory topics for ages 8-10
- Level 2 – Secondary topics with a bit more depth for ages 10-14
- Level 3 – Slightly more advanced topics suitable for youth ages 15-18

This table outlines what is complete, the level, and what is in progress:

COMPLETED	LEVEL #	IN PROGRESS	LEVEL #
What is a Horse?	1	Parts of the Horse	1
Horse Health Part 1: Germs	1	Life Stages of the Horse	1
Horse Identification	1	The 3Fs	1
Horse Grooming	2	Horse Tack & Equipment	2
Safety Around the Barn	2	Horse Gaits	2
Chompers and Chewers	2	Monitoring Horse Health	3
Horse Breeds	2	Horse Behaviour and Safety	3
Horse Health Part 2: Germs & Diseases	2		
The Five Freedoms	3		

Future modules for development include:

Level 1: Basic Nutrition – What do Horses Eat? (more info than what is in the 3Fs)

Level 1: B4 You Getta Horse! (basic care, shelter, real costs, etc.)

Level 1: Why do you Wanna Getta Horse? (disciplines, basic riding, etc.)

Level 1: What to Expect at Your First Riding Lesson (what you will need, what to expect, how to find a good facility, basic info, etc.)

Level 2: Deciding to Compete – more information from the Why do Wanna Getta Horse? module, stepping up to learning about competing in different disciplines.

Level 2 or 3: More advanced nutrition information, still suited for youth.

The Horse Portal short courses

Since the Horse Portal's inception in 2017, Equine Guelph has continued to develop its roster of courses – now offering 21 public online short courses! Many partnerships have been developed with the provincial equestrian associations in Canada, racing partners, and U.S./International organizations, which help us continue to develop more courses, with the financial support of our course sponsors. The sponsors who help us develop our courses and extend special offerings for their members are greatly appreciated and are an important part of our educational development with just under 1,300 students registered.

Equine Guelph remains committed to developing new online courses and course content for individuals spanning the many sectors of the equine industry. Equine Guelph offers a variety of course formats including one- and two- week instructor-facilitated courses, as well as select courses with an on-demand format. The range of delivery options offered for our Horse Portal Courses increases accessibility and engage a maximum number of participants. By combining courses offered through The Horse Portal, students can now receive micro-credentials for developing their career pathways. Moreover, these short courses have encouraged many students to further their education by pursuing Certificates in Equine Science, Welfare and Business, and/or a Diploma in Equine Studies.

The education program is funded through tuition fees, workshops, and corporate sponsorships. This is invested into the development of new initiatives, the enhancement of ongoing programs, and the delivery of online education, virtual presentations, and webinars. Experts from different areas within the industry are consulted to maintain diverse perspectives. Equine Guelph's instructor-facilitated courses feature specialist instructors and often engage guest experts to participate, contribute insights and respond to questions.

2025-2026 Updates:

Three new on-demand courses were added to the growing roster this year. The first two are revised editions of our first courses – Horse Care & Welfare and Sickness Prevention in Horses, which normally were offered once a year in instructor-led format. Having these courses also be in on-demand format means that students have the opportunity to learn about the Code of Practice and Canada's Biosecurity Standard at their leisure. The third on-demand course – Large Animal Emergency Rescue: Awareness Level – provides foundational knowledge of the concepts of large animal rescue, and is available for

students participating in our in-person training workshops. This course was made possible thanks to funding support from the Grand River Agricultural Society.

In Winter 2026, Equine Guelph launched its NEW Conditioning the Racehorse Course under the instruction of award-winning Standardbred owner and trainer, Dr. Ian Moore. This course attracted 160 participants from all sectors within the race industry. Through our partnerships, a NEW Racehorse Hoof Care Course is under development for release Feb 2027. Funding for our Racehorse sector courses is provided by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

The Ontario Equine Education and Employment Program (OEEEP), a partnership with the Ontario Harness Horse Association (OHHA) and VPI Employment Services, completed its third run of programming this year, featuring four cohorts of students. The final cohort wrapped up the online portion of the Program in late Fall 2025. While OEEEP has yet to be officially renewed from the Government of Ontario, Equine Guelph stands ready to offer quality training to prospective new grooms in the future.

Looking ahead, The Horse Portal will continue to grow its roster of short courses, including: the Racehorse Hoof Care Course; a course to prepare individuals in caring for rescue horses; and our youth-oriented EquiManiaU!

Testimonials:

"I would like to take an opportunity in thanking Equine Guelph on a very informative and very well-organized learning experience. I would urge more people in all equine disciplines to try out the online courses for their own personal betterment can only be helpful long term"

- Student testimonial| Instructor-led Conditioning the Racehorse course| Mar 2026
"The instructor team were wonderful; they made good points and kept things simple and clear! Very well done!"

- Student testimonial| Instructor-led Body Condition Scoring course| Jan 2026

Horse Portal Partners currently include:

Provincial Horse Federations

- Alberta Equestrian Federation
- Equine Association of Yukon
- Horse Council of BC
- Island Horse Council
- Manitoba Horse Council
- New Brunswick Equestrian Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Equestrian Association
- Equestrian Nova Scotia
- Ontario Equestrian
- Saskatchewan Horse Federation

Racing Organizations

- Ontario Racing
- Horse Racing Alberta
- PEI Harness Racing Association
- Central Ontario Standardbred Association
- Standardbred Canada
- Ontario Harness Horse Association

Youth Partners

- 4-H Ontario

Animal Welfare Organizations

- Campbell Centre for the Study of Animal Welfare

Accreditation Partners

- Equestrian Canada
- the Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association

International Partners

- Saddle Up Safely (a program of the University of Kentucky Health Care,
- UK college of Agriculture and many community organizations)
- Equine Connection

More information is provided in the Appendices.

Education Tuition Awards Provide Important Opportunities

The Roger L'Heureux Memorial Award commemorates a dedicated racing enthusiast and provides an opportunity for a Standardbred driver, trainer or groom or University of Guelph student to continue with their educational studies.

Sara Visser, a second-semester Veterinary Technician student with a growing passion for Standardbred racing, has been awarded the prestigious 2025 Roger L'Heureux Memorial Equine Award.

Equine Guelph sincerely thanks the L'Heureux family for their generosity providing these special educational awards and for their foresight in supporting the efforts of students for their career aspirations in the racing industry.

Large Animal Rescue Training Program

Program Partner: Grand River Agricultural Society

The Large Animal Rescue Program was developed for the equine industry and beyond for first responders, veterinary staff, and horse/facility owners in response to the need for this specialized training. This program helps with emergency preparedness and response training when there is a need to respond to rescuing horses and other animals in emergency situations – a high-risk activity that requires the specialised training offered by Equine Guelph. The following report reviews the training that has been completed in 2025-2026.

Hands-on training:

Mildmay Fire Department, July 12, 2025

Under the weight of high humidity and soaring summer temperatures, firefighters from across Bruce County and beyond gathered in Mildmay, Ontario, for a demanding training session in large animal emergency rescue. Hosted by Equine Guelph and funded by the Bruce County Federation of Agriculture (BCFA).



BCFA President, Chris Cossitt expressed strong support for the 2025 initiative:

“Bruce County Federation of Agriculture (BCFA) was pleased to sponsor the recent training offered to firefighters with support from Rob Wells Trucking and Don Dittner Construction,” said Cossitt. “BCFA recognizes a need to support our rural firefighters with specific rural needs training resulting in 28 firefighters receiving the Equine Guelph, University of Guelph Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) training. Thanks to South Bruce Firehall Mildmay Station and Dave West, Fire Prevention Officer/Health and Safety Training Coordinator, for providing the location and support for our attendees.”



Participants included firefighters from South Bruce, Arran-Elderslie, Chatsworth, Severn Fire Rescue and South Bruce Peninsula, along with a team from Mildmay Veterinary Clinic.



Nova Scotia, at Whinny Hills Equestrian Centre, Lunenburg, Aug 15 and 16, 2025 – Awareness Level Courses in partnership with Equestrian Nova Scotia

Equine Guelph's Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) ran fully booked workshops at Whinny Hill Equestrian Centre in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. On August 16 and 17 2025, first responders, veterinarians, and horse owners gathered for a full day of hands-on training designed to prepare them for the unpredictable world of large animal emergencies.

Instructors: Victor MacPherson, EBSP Rescue, Dr. Chris Riley, Chair of Clinical Studies at the Ontario Veterinary College and internationally recognized instructor Dr. Rebecca Husted of TLAER Inc.

PEI, UPEI, August 19 and 20, 2025 – Awareness Level Courses

A few days later, the LAER team was welcomed by the Atlantic Veterinary College in Charlottetown, PEI, for another two successful workshops. Hosted on August 18 and 19, these sessions brought together veterinary professionals and emergency responders from across the island.

Equine Guelph extends heartfelt thanks to the many supporters who made these Eastern province workshops possible:



Grand River Raceway, October 17, 2025 – Awareness Level Training – Over capacity - Fire Departments in attendance included: Centre Wellington, Grand Valley & District, North Perth, Scugog, Milton, Guelph/Eramosa, and Woolwich, with representation from stations in Breslau, Floradale, Conestoga, Maryhill, St. Jacobs, and Elmira. Livestock hauler generously provided by John Sharpe.

Coverage from CTV Kitchener - www.ctvnews.ca/kitchener/article/first-responders-get-hands-on-lesson-in-large-animal-rescue/

March 6, 2026, fourth-year veterinary students at the **University of Guelph** participated in a LAER awareness-level training, as part of a fourth-year elective on public service veterinary medicine, designed to prepare future veterinarians for real-world emergency situations.

March 12, 2026, hosted at **Woodbine Racetrack in Toronto**. This workshop was delivered exclusively for AGCO-licensed racetrack veterinarians, recognizing the specialized risks and responsibilities associated with emergency response in racing environments.

The Woodbine training was led by Victor MacPherson as Lead Trainer, with veterinary instruction once again provided by Dr. Chris Riley. Assistant trainers included Katherine Hoffman and Troy Moffatt, with Moffatt bringing dual expertise as both an AGCO Inspector and a Southwest Oxford (SWOX) Fire Fighter and Fire Instructor.



Photo by: Susan Raymond

On-Demand: Large Animal Emergency Rescue Awareness Level – open for registration!
(February 2026)

Equine Guelph launched their Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) on-demand course. This Awareness Level online course is proudly offered with the Grand River Agricultural Society as a program partner.

The LAER online course is self-paced and on-demand so participants can learn at their convenience. Registrants must be a minimum of 18 years of age. They are given one-year access to all materials which require approximately 15–20 hours to complete. The cost is \$45, or free with registration for an Equine Guelph LAER hands-on course. Participants of 2025 hands-on courses also received access at no cost. The Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians recognizes this short online course as qualifying for five credits within Category 3 for RVTs.

The LAER online course is divided into six units:

Unit 1: Course introduction and foundational principles complete with “what would you do” scenarios

Unit 2: Incident Command and Management of large animal emergency rescue

Unit 3: Understanding large animal behaviour and safe handling practices, including dealing with loose animals.

Unit 4: Equipment and basic rescue techniques, including safety zones

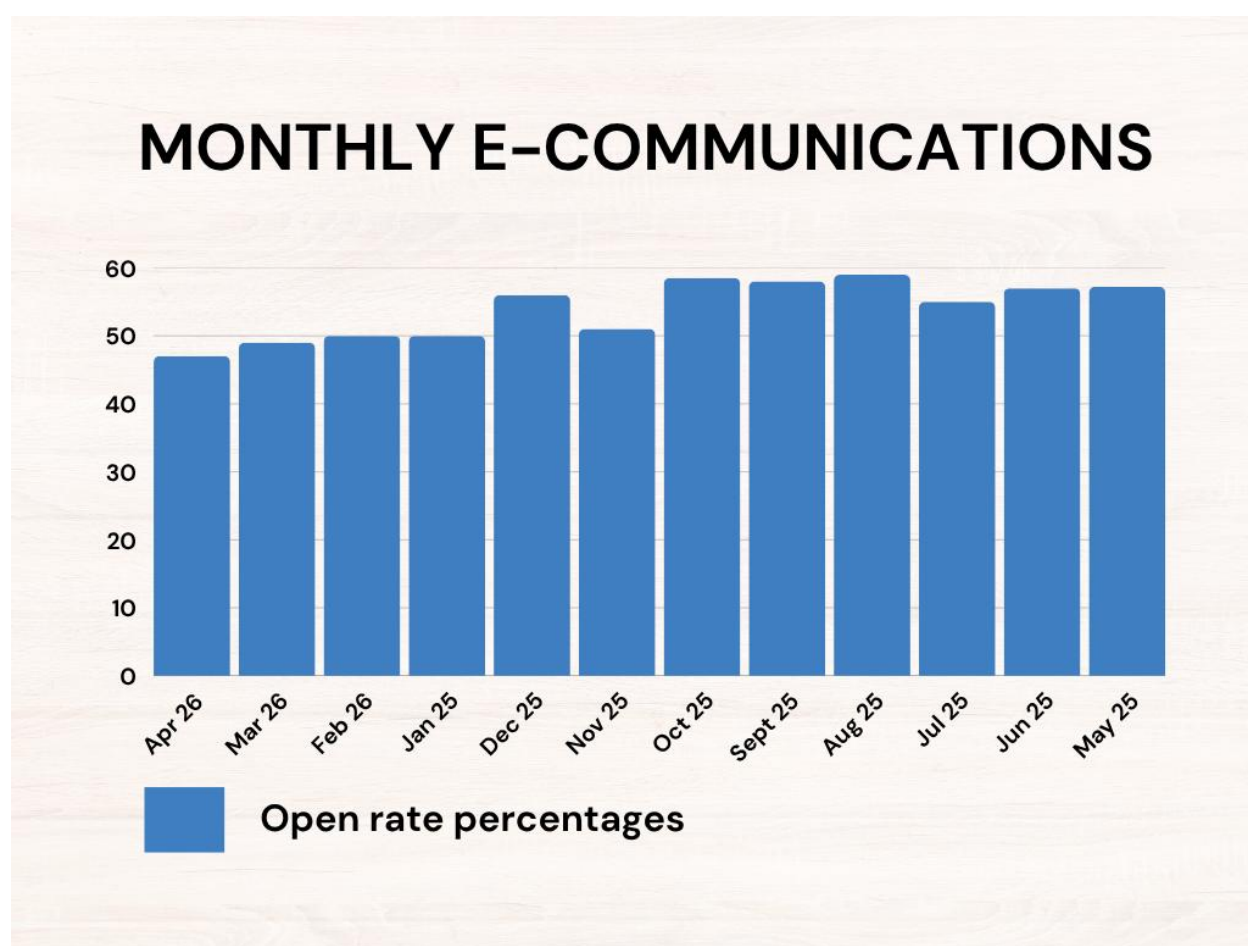
Unit 5: Advanced techniques overview

Unit 6: Scenarios for emergency preparedness

Course link: <https://thehorseportal.ca/course/on-demand-large-animal-emergency-rescue-laer-awareness-level/?swcfpc=1>

Communications and Marketing

Since its founding in 2003, Equine Guelph has remained a trusted source for sharing important information and new research insights. Our e-news subscribers continue to demonstrate strong loyalty, with an open rate of 54%. This fiscal year, our media list has also shown high engagement. The 43 press releases sent out by Equine Guelph communications achieved a 53% open rate—well above the 32% industry average for educational institutions (Constant Contact, April 2026). Through these channels, Equine Guelph delivers timely horse care and welfare news to a deeply committed audience.



Media response remains strong, with continued pickup of the resources and courses provided by The Horse Portal. Support from Central Ontario Standardbred Association, The Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association, and Standardbred Canada enables Equine Guelph to offer free courses to the racing sector, including *Racehorse Injury Lameness Prevention & Care* and the new *Conditioning the Racehorse* course, available to AGCO license holders and Standardbred Canada members.

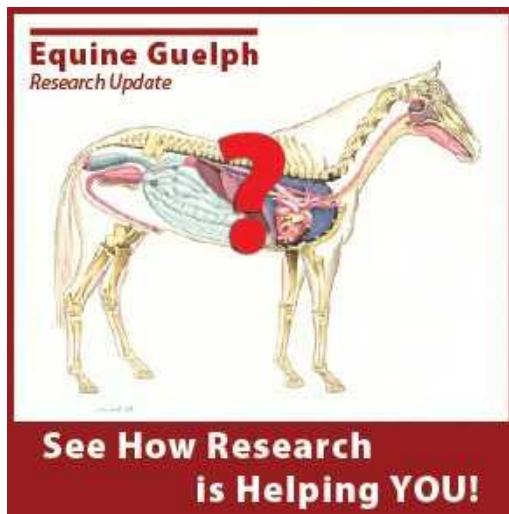
This project builds on a successful partnership first established in 2020 (funded by AGCO). Media uptake for these programs continues to be excellent within the racing sector, with ongoing coverage across numerous Standardbred, Thoroughbred, and Quarter Horse racing outlets. Racing media have demonstrated exceptional reach in distributing these racing-specific programs.

We have enjoyed an increase in media interest in the Large Animal Emergency Rescue program (LAER), with hands-on offerings delivering the specialized training required by fire fighters, first responders and the equine industry (across both racing and non-racing sectors). Media engagement around the LAER program remains strong, particularly for its educational video content.

Notably, LAER videos continue to be the most popular content on the Equine Guelph YouTube channel. The program's continued success has resulted in the capture of even more footage over the past fiscal year, and this upward trend is continuing. New video content is regularly being developed and shared, further extending the program's reach and impact. These videos are available on the Equine Guelph YouTube channel.

In addition to strong digital engagement, LAER has also attracted significant television and regional media coverage. CTV News attended and covered two Ontario events held in August and October. The Nova Scotia Equestrian Federation was instrumental in bringing LAER to Atlantic Canada, where the program also gained considerable media attention, including coverage by HalifaxExaminer.ca and Atlantic Horse and Pony, as well as a CBC Island Morning PEI radio interview.

Newsletter



Volume 23 of Equine Guelph's Research update was released in February 2026. Equine Guelph's 23rd Research Annual recaps impactful research from 2025, showcasing studies that advance equine health and welfare. Our feature article explores nephrosplenic entrapment and evidence supporting preventative surgical techniques for horses at risk of recurrence. Included in this feature is a video interview with Dr. Nicola Cribb from the department of Clinical Studies at the OVC.

Equine Guelph's newsletter maintains a strong focus on research while also providing updates on educational programs. Supported in part by industry investment in the research program, the

newsletter plays an important role in extending the reach of research findings to the broader equine community. A PDF version is available on the Equine Guelph website and is widely promoted through the Equine Guelph e-news and press releases.

Additional research articles shared through the monthly e-news and press releases that achieved strong reach included topics such as, the importance of being proactive when it comes to biosecurity, emerging developments concerning Potomac horse fever, advances in lameness diagnostics, concerns over obesity in horses and challenges related to lesson horse welfare. Many of these research features are complemented by video interviews, which are cross-posted and distributed across our social media platforms, including the Equine Guelph YouTube channel.

Direct industry funding support for the Communications and Marketing program was \$38,000 for the year, which came through the Horse Improvement Program (HIP) / Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association of Ontario (HBPA).

Equine JobTrack

Finding employees continues to be a problem in the equine industry across Canada. Equine JobTrack provides a free service to our industry for both job seekers and employers. It provides a major supporting role for the Ontario Equine Education and Employment program. Equine Guelph recognizes the support of HBPA for initial development of JobTrack and further funding from Grand River Agricultural Society and Ontario Racing.

Equine Guelph sincerely thanks HBPA, Ontario Racing, and Grand River Agricultural Society for their contributions that have enabled this valuable and free service to be upgraded and enhanced as a service to our industry. Equine JobTrack continues to be the top landing page on TheHorsePortal.ca

E-news & HEALTHflash

Equine Guelph's Communications team produces our free monthly e-news, keeping the industry in the loop on horse health, welfare, and safety. It also highlights the latest education and training opportunities and how industry-funded research continues to advance equine health.

Our e-news continues to gain strong traction, with articles regularly picked up by national and international media, showing it's a trusted source for keeping audiences informed.

Thanks to our sponsors, we also deliver HEALTHflash (launched in 2013): a popular quarterly series with seasonal email reminders plus monthly health alerts. More than a decade later, it continues to reach a wide international audience through distribution across Canada and the U.S., with support from provincial equine associations, HorseJournals.com, SystemEquine.com, The Rider, and many others.

Website

TheHorsePortal.ca continues to serve as the central hub for our online course offerings. This virtual learning platform delivers accessible, industry-relevant training across all sectors of the equine industry, supporting our mission to improve equine welfare through education.

TheHorsePortal.ca page views are 257,736 and the combined total of page views for this fiscal year to both EquineGuelph.ca webpages and TheHorsePortal.ca are 284,707.

The top landing page on TheHorsePortal.ca is the home page, with 15,023, followed by the Pregnancy Wheel/Mare and Foal HealthCare Tool, with 13,076. The most frequently visited educational course offering this fiscal year was the On-Demand Horse Behaviour and Safety Youth Course. This was due to a three-month period in which the course was made available for free (Jan 1 – Mar 31, 2026).

YouTube Channel

Equine Guelph's YouTube channel remains a powerful tool for extending the reach of research and practical education to the equine community, even as the digital landscape continues to evolve.

This fiscal year, video views totaled 44,780, reflecting changes in how YouTube measures and promotes content. Importantly, visibility remains strong, with 191,024 impressions. This demonstrates that Equine Guelph content continues to be widely presented to audiences seeking credible, educational information.

In response, Equine Guelph has adapted its strategy to prioritize content that delivers clear, practical value and encourages deeper engagement. This shift is already showing meaningful impact.

Our top-performing videos highlight strong engagement with short-form content, particularly from the Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) program. These short videos are highly effective in delivering critical, actionable skills such as trailer rescue techniques, drag and slide methods, forward assists, and emergency halter creation. This format is helping extend essential safety knowledge to a broader audience in an accessible and practical way.

At the same time, cornerstone learning content such as the Lameness Lab series continues to attract viewers looking to build hands-on assessment skills. This reinforces Equine Guelph's role as a leader in applied, science-based education.

Equine Guelph's digital authority remains a key strength. The program ranks #1 in Google search results and is also a top result in emerging artificial intelligence–driven search tools. This ensures that trusted, research-based information is easy to find when it is needed most.

This visibility is translating into global reach. For example, a new student from Africa recently discovered Equine Guelph through ChatGPT using the search “online accredited courses for racehorse pre-trainers,” where Equine Guelph appeared at the top of the results.

While performance metrics are evolving, the outcome is clear. Equine Guelph continues to deliver high-quality, evidence-based education to a broad and engaged audience. By adapting to new formats and maintaining strong search visibility, the YouTube channel plays an important role in supporting safer, more informed horse care and welfare across the industry.

Media, Seminars and Presentations, Association Targeted Communication

Equine Guelph continues to maintain a strong media presence and industry voice through regular press releases, presentations, and targeted communications. In 2025–26, over **280 articles** were published in equine industry media, highlighting our programs and research (see Appendix 12). A full list of seminars and presentations by Equine Guelph staff is available in **Appendix 8**.

Our communications are designed for easy integration into both print and digital formats, ensuring wide accessibility. Coverage spans both racing and non-racing sectors, with consistent features in publications such as: *The Rider Magazine*, *HorseJournals.com*, *Standardbred Canada*, *Horse-Canada*, *Horse Sport*, *Ontario Veterinary College Bulletin*, *The Paulick Report*, *Small Farm Canada*, *Standardbred Canada*, *Quarter Horse Racing Owners Ontario*, *Harness Link* and *Wellington Advertiser*.

We distribute two press releases monthly through American Horse Publications, reaching a broad list of equine media groups throughout the United States.

International media interest continues to grow, with features in European Trainer magazine and North American Trainer magazine, Equine Info Exchange, EquineChronicle.com (Florida, USA), EquusMagazine.com (USA media partner of the American Association of Equine Practitioners), HarnessLink.com (Globally distributed, tailored to Standardbred racing audience), Catskill Horse (NY & Eastern USA), My Senior Horse, Northwest Horse Source (Colorado USA), Colorado Horse Source, Equine Science Update (UK with global distribution), HorseNation.com (USA with global reach), Eventing Nation, Vet.Purdue.edu (USA), EquiMed, AmericanFarriers.com, AQHA (USA), EverythingHorseUKco.uk, Equine Disease Communications Center (USA) and others.

New media interest was received from Wellington Federation of Agriculture, EquestrianLife.com, and DoubleDTrailers.com.

Featured Coverage

Equine Guelph initiatives were prominently featured in *Trainer Magazine*, becoming a regular inclusion in all four of its North American issues, with many articles also appearing in the European edition, extending reach to the Thoroughbred racing industry on a global scale.

The LAER program received national television coverage from CTV Kitchener, along with coverage from CBC Island Morning News. Additional media attention for the LAER program was secured through the *National Post* and other local news outlets. A special feature on Equine Guelph's *Training Prioritizing Safety for Horse Handlers & First Responders*, which included an interview with LAER program coordinator Dr. Susan Raymond, was also distributed by the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) during Canada's Agricultural Safety Week.

Association and Partner Engagement

Equine Guelph maintains strong partnerships with provincial equine associations, which actively promote our programs, including *TheHorsePortal.ca*. **Ontario Equestrian (OE)** continues to be a key partner, supporting communications through social media and e-blasts. OE has been instrumental in promoting the *Ontario Equine Education and Employment Program (OEEEEP)*. Important partnerships have been developed with OE including a program to contribute to research support.

Additional support comes from sponsors and associations that help disseminate information on research and education/training initiatives including: The Horse Portal course offerings, racing industry specific courses, 12-week courses and more. Our outreach is further amplified through links from organizations such as **Equestrian Canada**, **Acera Insurance**, **SystemEquine.com**, and various veterinary and social media platforms. Our sponsors and associates direct the public to Equine Guelph's online courses, horse owner tools and research.

The Horse Portal has linked 10 provincial equestrian federations nation-wide, as well as the OSPCA, Campbell Centre for the Study of Animal Welfare, Ontario Racing, Horse Racing Alberta, Standardbred Canada, 4-H Ontario, Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association, Equestrian Connection and Saddle Up Safely, each with their own unique landing page generating traffic to the short courses offered by Equine Guelph.

Information Inquiries

Although Equine Guelph's overall reach remained steady in 2025–26, the volume of information requests continued to rise—highlighting our ongoing role as a trusted source of knowledge and support for the equine industry.

In 2025–26, we received a steady number of inquiries on a wide range of topics, including emerging health concerns, disease outbreaks, welfare issues, and environmental impacts. Many of these requests come from across Canada and internationally, reflecting our expanding global presence. Employment-related inquiries are directed to our **Equine JobTrack** platform.

Equine Guelph is increasingly recognized as a central information hub for the equine industry in Ontario, across Canada, and beyond. Our role extends beyond education and research to include support for industry development, sustainability, and environmental resilience—particularly in response to challenges such as wildfires and their impact on horse owners.

The most common topics of inquiry include:

- Welfare concerns, including veterinary shortages, equine welfare inspections, transportation, facility management and rising costs of keeping horses
- Heat stress, seasonal health risks, biosecurity and disease outbreaks
- Colic and ulcer prevention and nutritional guidance
- Euthanasia and disposal options
- Career pathways and training opportunities
- Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) courses
- Accessing reliable information on new diseases, medications, and diagnostics

This growing demand underscores the importance of our communications and outreach efforts, as we continue to serve as a vital source of accurate, timely, and trusted information for the equine community.

Development & Sponsorship

A. Equine Guelph 'Helping Horses for Life' Annual Fund Giving Campaign:

The following information reflects fundraising initiatives and private donations for FY2025-26:

Annual Fund Giving	FY24-25 Amount Raised	FY25-26 Amount Raised	FY25-26 No. of Unique Donors	FY25-26 Median Gift
OE Welfare Education Fund	\$1,693.00	\$1,498.00	1	\$1,498.00
Education	\$6,045.00	\$22,660.00	6	\$20.00
Large Animal Emergency Rescue Training		\$1,000.00	1	\$1,000.00
Research (donations only)	\$5,745.00	\$5,190.00	21	\$20.00
Greatest Need	\$28,755.00	\$40,635.98	50	\$100.00
Totals	\$42,238.00	\$70,983.98	79	-

TABLE I - Funds raised from private donations to EG accounts during FY24-25 and FY25-26 including number of unique donors and the median size of gift for each account

Annual Appeal:

The appeal was scheduled to be mailed in October 2025 but was cancelled due to the Canada Post strike. As a back-up plan, the appeal was sent in the form of two e-mails. The first e-mail was sent to Equine Guelph donors that should have received the mailing and were eligible to receive e-mail to help with the cancelled mailing due to the Canada Post Strike. The second e-mail targeted donors of Equine Guelph that are contactable by email only.

This was followed up by an e-mail chaser sent in November 2025 as part of Equine Guelph's donor renewal strategy.

The following stats measure the gifts from Equine Guelph's annual appeal initiative:

OCT APPEAL	FY24-25 MAILING	FY25-26 E-MAILS	NOV E-MAIL CHASER	FY24-25	FY25-26
Recipients	245	125	Recipients	178	97
Total cash-in	\$2,140	\$1,100	Total cash-in	\$2,550	\$4,540
Total donors	24	2	Total donors	10	10

TABLE II – Comparison of select metrics for the past two appeals.

Ontario Equestrian Annual Membership Mailing Fundraising Program:

Each year Ontario Equestrian (OE), through its annual membership renewal form, gives its members an opportunity to donate to a cause (Equine Guelph is one option on a list of choices). OE raised \$1,498.00 from its members in FY2025-26.

B. Major Estate Giving:

The following information reflects major/estate gifts, both endowed and expendable funds, in FY2025-26:

Grand River Agricultural Society (funding Education): In 2024, GRAS made a three-year commitment of \$180,000 in support of the following EG initiatives: Equine JobTrack, Large Animal Emergency Training and Youth Programming. The donation for the second year, FY2025-26, was \$60,000.

***Kerr Fund for Equine Education and Community Outreach:** The purpose of the Fund is to support ongoing base operational funding for EG horse education, communication and community outreach initiatives. The total endowment balance is \$338,902.44.

***OVC Equine Guelph - Estate of Donna Moore Endowment:** Endowed and expendable funds from the estate of Donna Moore were donated to fund now and in perpetuity, equine education/communications supporting research. The total endowment balance is \$1,087,322.13.

***Deborah H Juhnke Fund:** Endowed and expendable funds were donated to the fund now and in perpetuity, Equine Guelph's top priorities in equine education with a preference for non-professional horse owner education (with a primary focus on adults), i.e., development of videos, tools and courses, as well as marketing of Equine Guelph's curriculum. A gift of \$41,349 was received. The first \$30,000 will be directed to the expendable portion of the fund and the remaining \$11,349 will be endowed.

** Note Amounts are unaudited. Final audited numbers available in the Fall of 2026.*

C. Major Funding Sources for Equine Research:

Equine Guelph supports several high-quality projects at the University of Guelph, by virtue of funding provided largely by the racing industry (Standardbred, Thoroughbred and Quarter horse organizations): the Horse Improvement Program (HIP) and The Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (HBPA), as well as annual endowment allocations from the E.P. Taylor Fund and the Estate of Donna Moore. The following information reflects major funding from the Ontario equine industry and the E.P. Taylor fund directed to the research programs in FY 2024-25 and 2025-26:

Funding Designated for Research	FY24-25 Funding	FY25-26 Funding
HIP	\$125,000	\$125,000
HBPA	\$65,000	\$65,000
E.P. Taylor Fund	\$103,231	\$105,606
OVC Equine Research Estate of Donna Moore		\$134,740.74
Totals	\$293,231	\$430,346.74

TABLE VI – Comparison of research funding received over the past two years.

Horse Improvement Program: HIP is overseen by Ontario Racing with a percentage of the wagering handle from Thoroughbred, Standardbred and Quarter Horse racing in Ontario directed to racing-related research funding.

HBPA: The HBPA represents owners and/or trainers of thoroughbred racehorses, and the organization has supported the research program since Equine Guelph's inception in 2003. In FY2025-26, HBPA provided \$65,000 in support of racing-related research funding.

EP Taylor Fund (funding Research): Started by leaders in the Thoroughbred industry, the EP Taylor Fund is now maintained in trust by the University and Equine Guelph. Interest derived from the fund annually is made available for Equine Guelph funded research projects as prioritized by the EG Research Committee.

OVC Equine Research – Estate of Donna Moore Endowment: Endowed and expendable funds from the estate of Donna Moore were donated to fund now and in perpetuity, equine research.

D. Sponsorship Program – Funding Education Programs:

The FY2025-26 sponsorship program revenue decreased from the year before (\$97,150), given the loss of two sponsors. Total revenue from the corporate sponsorship program was **\$79,300**.

Sponsor	Education Initiatives	Revenue
Acera Insurance Services Ltd.	Colic Prevention Education Month (tool/course), Hoofprints program, lameness course, portal PTSO partner pages, risk brochures	\$15,000
Boehringer Ingelheim Canada	EG E-News & Senior Horse Education Month (tool/course)	\$13,500
Central Ontario Standardbred Association	Free racing-exclusive courses (conditioning, lameness)	\$10,000

Horsemen's Benevolent Protection Association	Free racing-exclusive courses (conditioning, lameness)	\$13,000
Kubota Canada Ltd.	Online behavior & safety courses (youth & adult offerings)	\$5,000
Masterfeeds	Equine Nutrition Education Month (body condition scoring course/tool)	\$10,000
Standardbred Canada	Free racing-exclusive courses (conditioning, lameness)	\$2,800
Zoetis	Vaccination Education Month (tool/course), World Rabies Day promo	\$10,000
Total		\$79,300

TABLE VII – Represents sponsorship funds from FY2025-26

E. Equine Guelph Grants for Education

Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario – \$35,000 in FY2025-26

(3-year term: \$105,000 @ \$35,000/year)

In 2019-2021, Equine Guelph received significant funding from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (Education, Training and Awareness Fund) to develop three courses exclusively for the horse racing industry in response to industry-identified priorities: respiratory, injury/lameness and gut health. These racing-exclusive courses have been offered free to the industry every winter since inception.

In 2025-26, Equine Guelph submitted a proposal to develop an additional three courses – again based on industry-identified priorities: conditioning, hoof care and nutrition. The funding was secured and these three new courses will be developed over the next three years as well as updates to the existing courses. These courses help trainers, grooms and all caregivers to maximize racehorse health.

F. Equine Guelph Resource Store:

Equine Guelph retails laminated barn posters (printing costs were previously sponsored) at major events and through mail-order. Total poster revenue in FY25-26 was **\$19.98**.

Financial Report

The Year End 4th Quarter Financial Report is included in the Appendices. Quarterly reports are produced for the Equine Guelph Advisory Council. Financial reports include forecasting of revenue and expenditure for each of the program areas and year-to-date statements.

Equine Guelph revenue totaled \$1,109,305 for the fiscal year (compared to \$983,938 for previous year) with funding provided by our funding partners, donations, endowments (Cheryl Kerr and Donna Moore) and online course tuition, as well as the one-time revenue from the sale of EquiMania's Minnesota State Fair exhibit. Program expenditures totaled \$998,822, comparable to \$990,628 last fiscal year.

Expenditures for the education and communications program were \$787,972, which included program development, online education programs, and marketing. Online education tuition returned a total of \$76,815 (compared to \$114,035 from last fiscal Year. While Horse Portal short course revenue remained steady, 12-week course revenue was down significantly.

The research program allocated \$481,998 for research projects, and \$207,612 was distributed to researchers this fiscal year. Further distributions of funds will be completed in the next fiscal year, as some projects are still awaiting receipt of their Animal Utilization Protocol (AUPs) to begin their work.

While there are still challenges for ongoing stability in funding from the racing industry, funding levels have been consistent in recent years. Industry funding support to Equine Guelph was \$38,000, which equals what was contributed the previous five fiscal years. This funding is used for the support of administration of the research funding program and direct-to-industry communications on the research program's results.

The majority of funding for the education/communications program continues to come from tuition, sponsorships, endowments, and in-person training. Research funding from the industry has remained stable for the past five years, and with the endowment revenue from the Estate of Donna Moore, the Research Program can offer even more funding opportunities to worthy proposals than before. Research and education/training of the members of the racing and non-racing community will continue to be an important part of future success.

Highlights and Special Events

May 2025 – April 2026

Welcome to our highlight reel. If you would like to know more about any of the following press releases, click on the titles to follow the web link to the full story.



May14

Review of Roaring & Possible New Surgical Procedure

Roaring in horses is not just a loud, raspy noise made during exercise; it is an issue in the upper airway that restricts airflow and can limit performance in large breed horses such as Thoroughbreds, Standardbreds, and warmbloods. Ontario Veterinary College associate professor of Large Animal Surgery, Taralyn McCarrel, is seeking to develop a surgical...



May27

Hamilton Mounted Police Reinvest in Large Animal Emergency Rescue

Next LAER Offering in Nova Scotia! Equine Guelph's Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) training team returned to the beautiful Holly Oaks Farm on April 30, 2025 in Lynden, ON. The trailer fully stocked with specialized tools and rescue mannequins for the one-day refresher workshop. Hamilton Mounted Police partnered with Equine Guelph for their fifth workshop...



Jun3

Ontario Racing Launches Free Online Horse Education Program for Youth

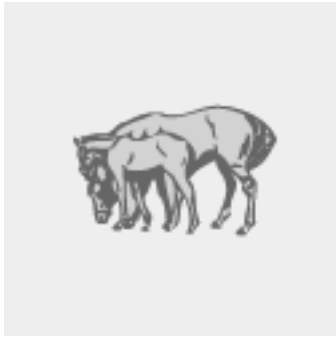
Announcing Horse eCamp, an exciting new youth initiative presented by Ontario Racing and education partner Equine Guelph, is online now! The FREE virtual learning program is designed to educate and inspire youth with a passion for horses. The online program aims to introduce teens to the world of horses and showcase potential careers in the...



Jun26

Ontario Agricultural Equine Economic Impact Study

The Ontario Agricultural Equine Economic Impact Study is a vital initiative aimed at capturing the full scope and significance of Ontario's equine sector. Led by the Ontario Harness Horse Association and the Ontario Equine Educational and Employment Program (OHHA/OEEEP), and backed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA), this study invites all stakeholders to...



Jul2

A Look at Learning Theory for Reducing Stress and Developing Top Performers

Who doesn't want to produce a performance athlete who is less stressed, experiences fewer setbacks and enjoys improved welfare? It has been shown that correct application of learning theory principles, starting from a young age, can clear the track. Learning theory explains how each horse acquires, processes, and remembers the knowledge they need to perform...



Jul22

First Responders in Bruce County Receive Specialized Large Animal Rescue Training

Next Stops: Nova Scotia and PEI Under the weight of high humidity and soaring summer temperatures, firefighters from across Bruce County and beyond gathered in Mildmay, Ontario, for a demanding training session in large animal emergency rescue. Hosted by Equine Guelph and funded by the Bruce County Federation of Agriculture (BCFA), the July 12 workshop...



Jul29

What Diagnostics are Available for Common and Complex Equine Lameness?

Dr. Taralyn McCarrel's journey into equine lameness began with her early experiences riding and working at a hunter barn. Recognizing the critical importance of soundness for both horses and riders, she developed a keen eye and ear for detecting lameness issues. Her passion for veterinary medicine led her to graduate from the Ontario Veterinary College...



Jul29

Equine Guelph Annual Report

Year in Review From international student engagement to groundbreaking research and career-building programs, it's been a year of impact and innovation! Highlights include awards, 36 research projects supported, triple last year's video views, and over 700 students taking our award-winning online courses around the globe.



Jul31

Ontario Racing Expands Youth Education with Horse eCamp and Kids' Day Camps

Summer is in full swing, and horse-powered fun has begun! Ontario Racing, in collaboration with Equine Guelph, is moving at full stride with its commitment to youth education by offering two exciting, free programs: Horse eCamp, an online learning experience, and a Kids' Day Camp series at eight racetracks across Ontario. These initiatives aim to spark curiosity, build...



Aug7

August is Make a Will Month: Planning Ahead for Your Horse's Future

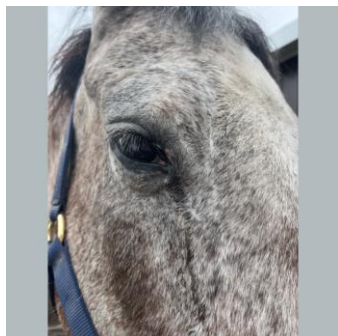
If you're a horse owner, August is a timely reminder to think about your legacy—and the future of your equine companions. Horses are more than pets; they're partners, athletes, and family. And just like any dependent, they deserve a plan for their care if something happens to you. Who Will Look After Your Horse?



Aug18

Can Whole Food Nutrition Combat Leaky Gut in Horses?

New University of Guelph study explores the gut-health potential of activated hemp seed powder Could a simple, nutrient-rich feed ingredient hold the key to managing one of the most elusive conditions in equine health? A new research initiative at the University of Guelph aims to shed light on a little-understood and potentially widespread condition in...



Sep2

Focus on Vision Care for Equine Guelph's Senior Horse Education Month

As horses age, their needs evolve—and so should our understanding of how to care for them. This September, Equine Guelph is shining a spotlight on eye health in senior horses as part of their annual Senior Horse Education Month. Horse owners are invited to explore this year's theme, 'A Clearer View,' through two resources: the free Senior Horse Challenge ...



Sep2

World Rabies Day 2025 – Protecting Horses and Humans

On September 28, this World Rabies Day, the equine community is joining the global movement to prevent rabies by taking action—together. The 2025 theme, "Act Now: You, Me, Community," announced by the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC), highlights the power of individual and collective responsibility in preventing this deadly disease. Legal Requirements for Horse Owners in Ontario...



Sep8

Large Animal Emergency Rescue Training Heads to Elora After Successful Atlantic Canada Workshops

Equine Guelph's Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) training team made waves on the East Coast this summer with fully booked workshops at Whinny Hill Equestrian Centre in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. On August 16 and 17 2025, first responders, veterinarians, and horse owners gathered for a full day of hands-on training designed to prepare them for...



Sep10

Ontario Racing Industry Scholarship from Equine Guelph

Equine Guelph is proud to support Ontario's racing community through education and a scholarship that empowers individuals to improve horse welfare and safety. The Roger L'Heureux Memorial Equine Award, honours the legacy of the respected Standardbred driver and trainer by supporting students who demonstrate a passion for equine care and learning. Equine Guelph offers this tuition...



Sep23

Tackling Trailer Safety

Hit the Road with Husted – Be Ready Before You Roll Whether you're hauling horses to a show, a trail ride, or an emergency evacuation, transporting equines safely is a responsibility that demands preparation, knowledge, and confidence. That's why Equine Guelph is once again offering its highly respected Horse Trailer Safety course on TheHorsePortal.ca, led by internationally recognized expert Dr. Rebecca Husted...



Sep29

Rate of Penicillin Administration Affects Arterial Blood Pressure

Veterinarians often give penicillin to horses during surgery to prevent infection, but the speed of injection may influence how the horse's cardiovascular system reacts. In a study of 29 horses under general anesthesia, researchers compared two methods of giving penicillin: a fast injection over one minute and a slower one over ten minutes. Both methods caused...



Oct9

Why Did My Horse Just Do That?

Understanding Horse Behaviour and Stable Safety – A Course for Adults on TheHorsePortal.ca You're leading your horse to the paddock. It's a quiet morning, birds chirping, nothing unusual in sight. Then bam! — your horse spooks sideways, nearly knocking you off your feet. You look around, baffled. What just happened? If you've ever asked yourself...



Oct24

Equine Emergency Rescue at the Races

Firefighters, emergency managers, veterinary professionals, and community stakeholders from across southwestern Ontario gathered at Grand River Raceway in Elora for a specialized Large Animal Emergency Rescue course, from Equine Guelph. Grand River Agricultural Society (GRAS) provided foundational funding for the program back in 2014 and was proud to support the full-to-capacity one day hands-on workshop...



Oct28

Free Online Courses for Racing Industry include New Conditioning Course

Equine Guelph is excited to announce two free online courses for the racing community again this winter, developed in response to industry demand and supported by our education partners. In a recent poll, 49% of industry stakeholders voted for Racehorse Conditioning as the next priority topic. We listened—and we're delivering! NEW! Conditioning the Racehorse February 23...



Nov24

Industry Ambassadors Return to Champion Free Online Racing Courses

Equine Guelph is thrilled to announce the return of its Industry Ambassador program this winter, featuring two respected voices from the horse racing community. Julie Walker and Renée Kierans will lead the charge in promoting free online training and acting as peer helpers in racing-exclusive courses designed to advance racehorse health and performance This year's initiative offers...



Dec1

Lesson Horses in Canada: A Closer Look at Care, Challenges, and the Road Ahead

Lesson horses are the heart of equestrian education in Canada. They teach beginners how to ride, help build confidence, and often serve as the first connection between people and horses. For many riders, these horses are the gateway to a lifelong passion—and for researcher Caleigh Copelin, they were the reason she entered the field of...



Dec9

Prevent Lameness Before It Starts: Free Online Course for the Racing Industry

Join leading equine experts for practical strategies to keep racehorses sound and performing at their best Equine Guelph invites the racing community to join a free online course designed to help prevent injuries and manage lameness in racehorses. This two-week program (5–10 hours/week) is tailored for trainers, grooms, and racing professionals who want to deepen...



Dec16

Free Online Horse Education Program for Youth – A Holiday Treat from Ontario Racing and Equine Guelph!

Looking for something fun, free, and educational for your horse-loving teen this holiday season? Horse eCamp, presented by Ontario Racing and Equine Guelph, is the perfect online activity to keep kids engaged while school's out! Available now through March 2026, Horse eCamp is a FREE virtual learning experience designed to spark curiosity and introduce youth...



Dec17

Survey Reveals Emotional and Practical Challenges in Managing Horse Weight

Research collected by University of Guelph post-doctoral scholar Megan Ross as part of her recent PhD work from the Atlantic Veterinary College and in collaboration with Dr. Katrina Merkies shines a light on the complex decisions horse owners face when managing equine weight. Previous research shows that nearly 29% of Canadian horses are overweight...



Jan8

The Overweight Horse – A New Year's Resolution

Preventing Obesity Equine Guelph has made a New Year's Resolution to empower horse owners to learn more about their horse's nutrition and needs. January, dubbed by Equine Guelph as Nutrition Education Month, will be dedicated to learning more about the overweight horse – increasing awareness of what caregivers can do to prevent their horses from...



Jan12

Sara Visser Awarded 2025 Roger L'Heureux Memorial Equine Award

Equine Guelph is proud to announce that Sara Visser, a second-semester Veterinary Technician student with a growing passion for Standardbred racing, has been awarded the prestigious 2025 Roger L'Heureux Memorial Equine Award. Visser will receive two online courses through Equine Guelph valued at \$625 each (Certificates are available in Equine Science, Equine Welfare and Equine...



Jan14

Kickstart Your Horse Journey in 2026 – Free Safety & Behaviour Course for Youth!

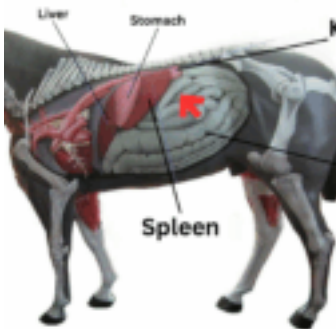
Ready to level up your horse knowledge in the new year? Equine Guelph, the horse owner's centre at the University of Guelph, is thrilled to offer FREE access to its On-Demand Horse Behaviour and Safety course for youth from January 1 – March 31, 2026! This is your chance to join young horse enthusiasts worldwide...



Jan21

Improve Your Emergency Preparedness – LAER Online Launching Feb 2026!

On-Demand: Large Animal Emergency Rescue Awareness Level
Equine Guelph is excited to announce the launch of a Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) course, available on-demand starting February 2026. This Awareness Level online course is proudly offered with the Grand River Agricultural Society as a program partner. It is designed to provide awareness-level preparation...



Jan22

Study Supports Preventive Surgery to Reduce Recurring Entrapment Colic

Horse owners worry over recurring colic is justified. When a horse suffers nephrosplenic entrapment, a specific type of displacement colic, the risk of it happening again can be elevated. For high-performance horses, that means more than pain and emergency bills; it can disrupt training schedules and competition plans. A preventative surgery called laparoscopic closure of...



Feb2

Equine Guelph Explains Colic Risk Factors Plus New Research on Recurrence

Colic remains the number one killer of horses, other than old age, but horse owners can take proactive steps to reduce the risk of colic by understanding the many factors that contribute to this serious condition. February is Colic Prevention Month at Equine Guelph and in just 10 minutes you can complete the FREE interactive...



Feb3

Equine Guelph 2026 Research Annual

Equine Guelph 2026 Research Annual – Volume 23 Equine Guelph's 23rd Research Annual recaps impactful research from 2025, showcasing studies that advance equine health and welfare. Our feature article explores nephrosplenic entrapment and evidence supporting preventative surgical techniques for horses at risk of recurrence. Included in this feature is a video interview with Dr. Nicola...



Feb4

Conditioning the Racehorse – New Free Online Course for the Racing Industry

Equine Guelph is thrilled to announce the launch of its brand-new online course: Conditioning the Racehorse, offered FREE for AGCO licence holders and Standardbred Canada members from February 23 – March 6, 2026. For other members of the racing community, the course is available for a tuition of \$95. Developed in direct response to industry...



Feb23

Large Animal Emergency Rescue Training Credited in Saving Retired Police Horse

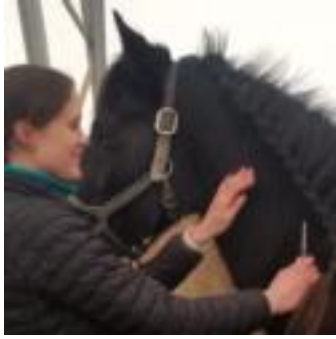
Thanks to quick thinking, teamwork, and specialized training from Equine Guelph's Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) program, a 29-year-old retired police horse named Dottie was successfully rescued after becoming dangerously unable to rise on a snowy, icy winter morning at Trinity Trotters, Dec 30, 2025. What began as a routine check-in by barn manager Tracey...



Feb27

Equine Guelph Offers Sport Horse Lameness/Injury Prevention Course to Celebrate World Horse Day

FREE Global Registration on March 1 World Horse Day has been celebrated on March 1st every year since it was created in 2005 to raise awareness of equine welfare and protection. For the 21th anniversary of World Horse Day, Equine Guelph at the University of Guelph will celebrate by offering horse enthusiasts the opportunity to reduce the occurrence...



Mar4

Vaccination Planning is Key

Prevention is Kinder than Cure Your horse's vaccination plan shouldn't be built on what you did last year. Risk isn't static and neither is your horse's life. New horses arrive at barns. Old ones move on. Show schedules change. Boarding arrangements shift. Even climate patterns influence disease risk. Vaccination decisions made in isolation, or out...



Mar10

Equine Agricultural Economic Impact Study Report Released

A group of dedicated equine stakeholders came together and formed a Steering Committee to launch an economic impact study of the overall Ontario equine industry. They are pleased to announce the completion and public release of the Ontario Equine Agricultural Economic Impact Study Report, the first comprehensive assessment...



Mar16

Horse Trailer Safety Course: Special Offer During Canadian Ag Safety Week

There is a lot riding on your tires when you haul horses. This Canadian Ag Safety Week (March 15–21), Equine Guelph is offering huge savings for those looking to ensure safe travels for their equine partners. Take this opportunity to brush up on trailering best practices, reduce risks on the road, and give your horses...



Mar18

Equine Guelph's Training Prioritizes Safety for Horse Handlers and First Responders

Story by: Erin Kelly for the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association
From dairy operations and beef cattle ranching to pig and sheep farming, livestock is integral to many farms across the country. But though livestock handling is a routine activity on many farms, it also carries significant risks. According to the latest Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting...



Mar25

Understanding Potomac Horse Fever

What Every Horse Owner Should Know As summer arrives, veterinarians and horse owners across Canada grow increasingly concerned about Potomac Horse Fever (PHF). Once rare, the disease is appearing more often in regions north of the U.S. Potomac is now considered endemic in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia. What Is Potomac...



Mar27

Large Animal Emergency Rescue Training Highlights the Critical Role of Veterinarians in Emergency Response

Equine Guelph delivers focused LAER workshops at the University of Guelph and Woodbine Racetrack Guelph / Toronto, ON — March 2026 —Two targeted training workshops held in March underscored the essential role veterinarians...



Mar31

Weigh in on Horse Trailer Safety

Have You Ever Taken Your Trailer to a Weigh Scale? Most owners haven't and many are surprised when they learn how much they're actually towing once horses, tack, water, and equipment are added. Safe and legal towing hinges on the manufacturer-assigned ratings on your vehicle and trailer, including GVWR, GCWR, GAWR, payload, and tongue weight....

Summary of Highlights

As Equine Guelph entered its 22nd year as the “Centre for the Horse Owner at the University of Guelph,” 2025–26 we were honoured to be recognized on a global stage at the World Horse Welfare annual conference. CEO Roly Owers named Equine Guelph as one of the top three “places to go” for evidence-based/welfare-based, non- biased information in plain language!



43 articles were released by Equine Guelph in the 2025/26 fiscal year



Equine Guelph council member, James A. Whelan, President of the Ontario Harness Horse Association and Ontario Equine Education and Employment Program and an Ontario Director of Standardbred Canada, was awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal by Donna Skelly, Ontario Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.



The Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) program saw significant growth, with increased demand for training courses across Ontario and Atlantic Canada, reinforcing the importance of emergency preparedness in the equine sector.



Development of the Racing courses for Ontario racing industry, now numbering 4 (Colic and Ulcer, Lameness, Respiratory, Conditioning) and a 5th one, Racehorse Hoof Care, under development.



Renewal of the Ontario Equine Education and Employment program from the Ontario government to continue this valuable program to the industry for its fourth year.

Our Deepest Thanks to Our Supporters

Equine Guelph is deeply grateful for the invaluable advisory input and financial support we receive from our Council, donors, partners, and students. Your contributions are instrumental in shaping our direction and enabling the development of new and enhanced programming.

We extend our sincere thanks to the members of our Advisory Council and our dedicated funding and supporting partners:

Central Ontario Standardbred Association

Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society

E.P. Taylor Equine Research Fund

Equestrian Canada

Grand River Agricultural Society

Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association of Ontario

Ontario Equestrian

Ontario Harness Horse Association

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Ontario Racing

Ontario Veterinary College

Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario, Inc.

Standardbred Canada

Standardbred Owners Association of Ontario

University of Guelph

We also extend heartfelt appreciation to our generous donors, partners, and sponsors. Your ongoing support helps us cover essential administrative costs and continue developing impactful programs for the equine community.

We couldn't do it without you—thank you!

Appendices

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Appendix 2: Equine Guelph Partners



**E.P Taylor
Equine Research**



 Ontario
Ontario Ministry of
Agriculture and Food



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Profiles at: <https://thehorseportal.ca/the-horse-portal-team/>

Appendix 4: Research Projects for 2025-2026

New Projects in 2025-26:

Investigator	Title
Arroyo, L.	Investigation of Escherichia coli Virulence Factors in Diarrheic Horses
Boddner, K.	Developing West Nile Virus Risk Forecasts to Support Equine Health Response and Planning
Changoor, A. & Koenig, J.	Advancing Electroarthrography for Clinical Use and Commercial Translation
Cribb, N. & Muñoz, A.	Development and Evaluation of a Simulation-Based Training Model for Equine Arthroscopy: Enhancing Surgical Competency and Clinical Outcomes in Residency Training
Kerr, C.	Optimization of Fluid Therapy in Anesthetized Horses: Establishing Dosing Recommendations Through Volume Kinetics
Koch, T.	Understanding the cellular interactions of equine cord blood-derived mesenchymal stromal cells in equine tendon repair
Koch, T. & Madan, P.	Do equine cord blood-derived mesenchymal stromal cells affect mitochondrial function in stressed chondrocytes?
Koenig, J.	Enhancing Septic Arthritis/Osteomyelitis Treatment in Foals: Exploring the Synergy of Activated MSCs and Antibiotics
Merkies, K.	The effect of an automated horse hay feeder on horse behaviour
Muñoz, A.	Intraoperative Assessment of Tissue Perfusion and Blood Flow Using Near-Infrared Fluorescence Imaging with Indocyanine Green
Riley, C.	Capturing the expertise of equine veterinary professionals to define the role of health in the Five Domains Model
Riley, C.	Driving Toward Optimal Welfare: Addressing the Needs of Working Cart Donkeys in Kenya
Valverde, A.	Effect of fluid boluses of 5% hypertonic saline or 0.9% isotonic saline on arterial blood acid-base and electrolytes when used to treat hypotension in anesthetized horses
Zakia, L.	Ultrasonographic evaluation of caudal vena cava diameter as a non-invasive tool to guide fluid therapy in sick neonatal foals

Continuing Projects:

Investigator	Title
Arroyo, L.	Development of a Core Outcome Set for Studies of Acute Colitis in Horses
Arroyo, L.	Improving Methods for Detection of Intestinal Dysbiosis in Horses
Arroyo, L.	The longitudinal development of the fecal microbiome and metabolome in neonatal foals
Avison, A.	Equine Myocardial Ion Channel Expression
Beeler-Marfisi, J.	Macrophage responses of healthy and severely asthmatic horses to agents that exacerbate equine asthma
Changoor, A. & Koenig, J.	Portable Electroarthrography & Biomechanical Measurement System to Evaluate Equine Cartilage Quality at the Point-of-Care
Chenier, T.	Dormant uterine Streptococcus equi spp zooepidemicus infections in broodmares: evaluating the potential diagnostic utility of cytokines and chemokines
Chenier, T.	Efficacy of an Oral Supplement Containing Omega Fatty Acids for Treatment of Persistent Breeding-Induced Endometritis (PBIE) in Mares.
Cote, N.	Evaluation of factors contributing to upper airway obstruction through repeated resting and dynamic respiratory endoscopies in 2-year-old Standardbreds
Gomez, D. & Valverde, A.	Hypotonic versus isotonic maintenance fluids in critically ill foals
Gomez, D. & Verbrugghe, A.	Fecal and serum metabolome and fecal bile acids and D-lactate concentrations in healthy horses and horses with colitis.
Kerr, C.	Optimization of Perioperative Fluid Therapy in Horses: Establishing Dosing Recommendations Through Volume Kinetics
Koch, T.	Mesenchymal stromal cells for the treatment of equine tendonitis
Koenig, J.	Do Activated Umbilical Cord Blood-Derived Mesenchymal Stromal Cells Treat Equine Fetlock Osteoarthritis Effectively?
McCarrel, T.	Development of an intraluminal arytenoid abduction device (ILAD)
Merkies, K. and Riley, C.	Exploring the effects of equine behaviour education on equestrian behaviour and lesson horse welfare
Muñoz, A.	Near-infrared display of indocyanine green in intraoperative tissue blood flow and tissue perfusion of healthy equine small intestine under laparoscopic guidance
Physick-Sheard, P. and Pyle, G.	Factors associated with cardiac arrhythmia in Standardbred racehorses

Riley, C.	A Prospective Study of Antimicrobial Susceptibility and Multidrug Resistance in Bacteria Isolated from Diagnostic Samples from Foals in Ontario
Torrent, A.	Fecal Microbiota Transplantation in horses via Pelvic Flexure Enterotomy during Colic Surgery

Appendix 5: Lay Summaries of Research Projects for 2025-2026

New Projects:

Arroyo, L. - Investigation of Escherichia coli Virulence Factors in Diarrheic Horses

Boddner, K. - Developing West Nile Virus Risk Forecasts to Support Equine Health Response and Planning

West Nile virus is spread by mosquitoes and can cause serious brain and spinal cord illness in horses. In Ontario, case numbers can rise sharply in some years and regions, making it hard to know when and where horses will be at risk. This project will develop forecasting tools using data on horse infections, mosquito activity, dead bird reports, weather, and environmental conditions to identify higher risk locations and periods. These forecasts will help owners and veterinarians act early to protect horses across Ontario.

Changoor A. & Koenig, J. - Advancing Electroarthrography for Clinical Use and Commercial Translation

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common cause of lameness in horses and is characterized by progressive and irreversible cartilage degradation. Cartilage is the thin tissue that lines the ends of bones in joints and normally enables pain-free movement. Early recognition of OA is important to be able to treat and potentially prevent disease progression, yet veterinarians have no easy way of identifying cartilage changes and objectively monitoring joint disease. Electroarthrography (EAG) is an innovative technology that evaluates cartilage through sensors placed on skin around a joint, such as the equine fetlock (metacarpophalangeal) joint. This is similar to the way heart health can be understood using electrocardiography. EAG, measured with a prototype measurement system, successfully followed OA progression and treatment in an equine fetlock model of early OA. Through this work, we found that the current adhesive electrodes, while very conductive, do not work well for horses because they can move during testing. This project aims to redesign the electrodes and validate the complete EAG system to ensure it accurately measures cartilage structure and joint biomechanics. We will work with an industry partner to develop the best electrode design and carry out validation studies with researchers at the University of Calgary. This research is expected to substantially advance EAG to produce a reliable and user-friendly measurement system that equine veterinarians can use to evaluate cartilage health in real time. Achieving the project aims would help move EAG from research into the clinic and dramatically improve how OA is managed in horses, while also laying the groundwork for developing EAG into a commercial product.

Cribb, N. & Munoz, A. - Development and Evaluation of a Simulation-Based Training Model for Equine Arthroscopy and Laparoscopy: Enhancing Surgical Competency and Clinical Outcomes in Residency Training

Comparable technical challenges are encountered in arthroscopy, where precise spatial orientation, triangulation, and instrument control within a confined joint space are required. To address these challenges, the proposed simulator will incorporate anatomically accurate replicas of the equine fetlock, carpus, tarsus, and stifle joints. Each joint model will reproduce key arthroscopic landmarks, joint capsule dimensions. Furthermore, the simulator will include representative osteochondral fragments positioned in clinically relevant locations to allow trainees to practice fragment identification, grasping, and removal using standard arthroscopic instrumentation and portals. This design will enable realistic simulation of common clinical scenarios, promoting the acquisition and assessment of fundamental arthroscopic skills under controlled, repeatable conditions.

Kerr, Carolyn - Optimization of Fluid Therapy in Anesthetized Horses: Establishing Dosing Recommendations Through Volume Kinetics

General anesthesia is required to safely and effectively perform major surgery in horses. Intravenous fluids are routinely administered during general anesthesia to replace fluid losses and maintain tissue perfusion; however, data on their distribution and elimination are scarce. Volume kinetic analysis (VKA) is a technique used to evaluate the distribution and elimination (disposition) of fluids within body compartments. This study aims to assess the pharmacokinetics of intravenous fluids in healthy horses using VKA while under anesthesia using two common protocols. We hypothesize that fluid elimination will be reduced in anesthetized horses compared to conscious horses and that the anesthetic protocol used will influence the distribution and elimination of fluids. The study will employ a randomized cross-over design with two different protocols used to maintain anesthesia: isoflurane alone or isoflurane in combination with an alpha-2 agonist. All horses will receive intravenous fluids administered as a bolus and infusion. Samples will be collected and VKA analysis will be performed. Results from this study will facilitate the establishment of guidelines for intravenous fluid doses and administration rates in healthy horses receiving general anesthesia achieved with two commonly used anesthetic protocols.

Koch, T. - Understanding the cellular interactions of equine cord blood-derived mesenchymal stromal cells in equine tendon repair

Tendon injuries affect up to 15% of racing animals across their career. Unfortunately, due to tendon's propensity to heal with nonfunctional scar tissue, the rate of re-injury and chronic pain after poor healing is high. Thus, our team has undertaken novel research using cord blood derived mesenchymal stromal cells (MSCs), a type of stem cell, to treat these injuries. We are already funded by Equine Guelph to understand if these cells may be able to persist in the injury site and improve outcomes after tendon injury. This work is ongoing and the live animal studies are expected to be completed in 2025. Through a new collaboration we have a unique opportunity to gain additional knowledge on how the stem cells affect tendon repair by employing cutting-edge laboratory techniques to characterize not only the types of cells present, but how these cells are interacting with one another in an injured tendon. Historically a difficult tissue to study due to its dense nature, our expanded team's unique expertise and use of new innovative technologies provide an exciting opportunity to shed new light on how tendon cells heal tendon injuries, and how the addition of new therapeutics may affect this. This unparalleled understanding of tendon biology will lay the groundwork for ongoing development and refinement of treatment approaches aimed at improving outcomes for horses living with tendon injury.

Koch, T. & Madan, P. - Do equine cord blood-derived mesenchymal stromal cells affect mitochondrial function in stressed chondrocytes?

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a leading cause of lameness and reduced performance in horses,

significantly impacting their health and athletic careers. Current treatments primarily manage signs but do not address the underlying causes of joint degeneration. Recent research in human medicine suggests that mesenchymal stromal cells (MSCs)—a type of stem cell—may offer longer-lasting relief than traditional treatments like corticosteroids. One promising mechanism is the ability of MSCs to transfer healthy mitochondria (the energy-producing parts of cells) to damaged cartilage cells, known as chondrocytes, potentially helping them recover from stress and function more effectively. This study aims to explore whether equine cord blood-derived (eCB) MSCs can improve mitochondrial function in stressed chondrocytes in a laboratory setting. Specifically, we will examine how chondrocyte mitochondria respond to stress and whether co-culturing them with eCB-MSCs can reduce this stress. Using advanced imaging and cell analysis techniques, we will assess cell health, proliferation, and DNA damage. Although we do not yet have preliminary data for this specific project, our team has extensive experience studying mitochondria in other cell types. If successful, this research could lay the groundwork for future studies on how eCB-MSCs might be used to treat joint diseases in horses more effectively. Ultimately, this work could lead to improved therapies that not only alleviate signs but also target the root causes of equine osteoarthritis.

Koenig, J. - Enhancing Septic Arthritis/Osteomyelitis Treatment in Foals: Exploring the Synergy of Activated MSCs and Antibiotics.

Mesenchymal stromal cells (MSCs) are recognized for their potent anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and immunomodulatory properties, making them a promising therapeutic option for combating antibiotic resistance and biofilm-associated infections. This report describes the successful treatment of septic arthritis and osteomyelitis in a foal using equine allogeneic cord blood-derived MSCs (CB-MSCs) in combination with antibiotic therapy. An 8-day-old Thoroughbred filly was initially presented with septic arthritis of the right tibiotarsal joint, pneumonia, and omphalophlebitis/arteritis. Subsequently, the filly developed septic arthritis of the left elbow joint, epiphysitis, and osteomyelitis of the ulna, which progressed to a pathological fracture.

Due to limited clinical and cytological improvement following needle lavage, arthroscopic lavage, and intra-articular antibiotic administration, the left elbow joint and fracture site were treated 3 times with 15 million TLR3-activated CB-MSCs in combination with 500 mg of meropenem. Additionally, the filly received twice systemic treatment with non-activated CB-MSCs (1 million cells/kg body weight IV, 2 doses). During the MSC therapy period, chloramphenicol was administered systemically. The treatment completely resolved both septic arthritis and osteomyelitis. At a 12-month follow-up, the filly remained sound, and radiographic re-evaluation showed significant remodelling of the ulna.

This case highlights the successful use of equine allogeneic CB-MSCs—both locally and systemically—in conjunction with antibiotics, to treat a refractory intra-synovial and osseous septic process in a foal. Including TLR3-activated CB-MSCs likely enhanced antimicrobial efficacy, underscoring the therapeutic potential of CB-MSCs' antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and immunomodulatory effects

Merkies, K. - The effect of an automated horse hay feeder on horse behaviour

Feeding is one of the most important factors affecting horse health and welfare. In natural environments, horses spend most of their day grazing, moving and interacting with other horses. In contrast, many domestic horses may be fed in a way that conflicts with their evolutionary adaptations. Providing ad lib access to hay for domestic horses helps prevent long gaps between meals but can lead to overeating and obesity, increasing the risk of painful and potentially life-

threatening metabolic diseases. Restricting hay to manage weight can cause frustration and increase the risk of ulcers, colic and stereotypic behaviours. Automated feeders (AFs) are an emerging technology that can provide hay in smaller amounts multiple times per day, supporting natural foraging behaviour while helping manage calorie intake. This study will explore horse behaviour when using an AF compared with traditional ad lib hay feeding. Twenty horses will be monitored using Hoofstep™ halters, which track movement and behaviour continuously, along with live observations. We expect that horses will initially show more movement and social interactions when being fed from the AF but that these behaviours will change as they become accustomed to it. By understanding how horses adapt to automated feeding systems, this study aims to help owners, caretakers and industry partners develop feeding practices that better support both physical and emotional well-being of the horse. Ultimately, this research will provide evidence-based guidance to improve the design and use of automated feeders, balancing the benefits of natural feeding rhythms with management practices.

Muñoz, A. - Intraoperative Assessment of Tissue Perfusion and Blood Flow Using Near-Infrared Fluorescence Imaging with Indocyanine Green in Clinical Cases Undergoing Exploratory Laparotomy Under General Anesthesia

When a horse is undergoing emergency exploratory laparotomy for colic, a key component of this surgery is evaluating whether the affected intestine has an adequate blood supply. Currently, this assessment relies primarily on the surgeon's visual impression. This study aims to determine whether Near-Infrared Fluorescence (NIRF) imaging with indocyanine green (ICG) can provide a real-time, objective measurement of intestinal blood flow and tissue viability. The goal is to improve intraoperative decision-making and support better surgical outcomes for equine colic patients in the future.

Riley, C. - Capturing the expertise of equine veterinary professionals to define the role of health in the Five Domains Model

Equine veterinarians are experts in the management of equine physical health. However, contemporary animal welfare science recognizes that good welfare extends beyond physical states such as health and nutrition. The Five Domains Model provides a systematic framework for assessing how nutrition, physical environment, health, and behavioural interactions influence an animal's mental state, recognizing that welfare is best understood as the overall balance of positive and negative mental experiences. While this model is widely adopted in animal welfare science, it has not yet been fully operationalized into practical tools for equine clinical practice, where welfare assessment often remains focused on health and body condition. Using a survey, we seek to understand equine professionals' familiarity with the Five Domains Model in Canada and other English-speaking countries, and compare these findings with those in New Zealand, where the framework was first developed and has been more widely socialized. We will also capture equine veterinary professionals' judgement as to horses' likely mental experiences across common health scenarios, informing subsequent co-design of a practical clinical aid for equine welfare assessment. This is the first step in bridging this gap by exploring the health domain and ultimately how it and the Five Domains Model may be integrated into equine veterinary practice.

Riley, C. - Driving Toward Optimal Welfare: Addressing the Needs of Working Cart Donkeys in Kenya

Working equids play a crucial role in supporting the livelihoods of vulnerable communities worldwide, including those in Kenya. In Meru County, working donkeys are essential for household income, performing demanding labour that would otherwise fall to family members. However, current harnessing methods used for donkey carts have been identified as a major

welfare concern, often causing pain, wounds, and breathing difficulties. Despite the efforts of welfare organizations, improved harnesses and carts are rarely adopted on a lasting basis. Common barriers include limited community involvement and approaches that are not locally sustainable. This project adopts a participatory approach, engaging donkey owners and drivers directly in the design, construction, and modification of harnesses and carts to enhance donkey welfare. Their feedback will shape the development of welfare-friendly carts tailored to their needs and working conditions. The project will also assess donkey movement and behaviour while pulling these improved carts, comparing signs of pain, breathlessness, and lameness to those observed with current carts. In addition, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews will explore current attitudes toward donkey welfare and the role of welfare organizations. By improving the working conditions and health of donkeys in Meru County, this initiative aims to enhance the well-being of over 8,000 donkeys and the families that depend on them. The lessons learned will help identify barriers to long-term adoption of welfare-friendly harnesses and carts, paving the way for sustainable improvements across Kenya and beyond.

Valverde, A. - Effect of fluid boluses of 5% hypertonic saline or 0.9% isotonic saline on arterial blood acid-base and electrolytes when used to treat hypotension in anesthetized horses

Hypotension (low arterial blood pressure) is a common occurrence in anesthetized horses and can be present in patients with a normal or decreased circulating blood volume. Reasons for hypotension include blood loss, dehydration, vasodilation, and decreased cardiac function. Hypotension is associated with higher morbidity/mortality in anesthetized horses because it affects organ perfusion during anesthesia and increases the risk of myopathy and fatalities in the recovery period. Treatment for hypotension in anesthetized horses includes adjustment of the anesthetic depth, administration of intravenous fluids, and use of sympathomimetic drugs; the latter can increase heart contractility and/or vascular tone, most commonly with dobutamine. Among intravenous fluids, hypertonic sodium chloride (5%) can be used at low doses because its increased concentration contains a higher amount (> 5 times) of sodium than blood and isotonic solutions, which attracts fluid from outside the blood vessels into the circulation and can help normalize transiently the circulating volume and arterial blood pressure. In addition, hypertonic saline increases heart contractility and regulates vessel tone, both which help mobilize this augmented circulating volume and results in a higher arterial blood pressure.

Despite these benefits, the increase in electrolytes (sodium and chloride concentrations) from the hypertonic solution can affect the pH of the blood and acid-base balance and dilute the amount of potassium and hemoglobin in blood, which can affect tissue function and oxygenation. This project will assess the effects of hypertonic (5%) and isotonic sodium chloride (0.9%) in horses that develop hypotension during general anesthesia in two fronts: 1) On the acid-base balance, electrolyte blood changes (sodium, chloride, potassium), and the changes from hemodilution on hemoglobin (Hb), packed cell volume (PCV) and total protein (TP), and 2) On the change in circulating volume and the effectiveness of both solutions on improving arterial blood pressure. We will compare the changes in electrolytes to established predictive formulas validated and in current use in human medicine, to seek their applicability in horses and be able to validate these formulas or modify them, to precisely predict changes in electrolytes, circulating volume and arterial blood pressure from their administration in horses.

Zakia, L. - Ultrasonographic evaluation of caudal vena cava diameter as a non-invasive tool to guide fluid therapy in sick neonatal foals

Young foals are at high risk for life-threatening illnesses that can cause significant loss of fluid from the body. This severe loss of fluid can limit the body's ability to perform vital functions like

circulating oxygen to the organs. The ability to accurately assess the severity of this fluid loss is key to appropriate treatment of the foal. Currently, there are no highly accurate ways of doing this in sick, young foals. However, in other species, measurements of a large vessel in the abdomen (caudal vena cava) with an ultrasound are strongly correlated with the amount of fluid loss that has occurred and how the patient is responding to the current treatment plan. A previously published study has shown that this vessel is visible with ultrasound in young foals and that measurements of the vessel are reliable. Determining if, like in other species, these ultrasound measurements correlate well with how much fluid a foal has lost and how the foal is responding to the treatment plan is vital information for improving our ability to care for very sick young foals.

Continuing Projects:

Arroyo, L. - Development of a Core Outcome Set for Studies of Acute Colitis in Horses

Acute colitis is a condition that significantly affects equine health, potentially leading to systemic complications, prolonged recovery times, and economic challenges for the equine industry. Despite its high prevalence and impact, the condition remains poorly understood due to the complexity of its risk factors and the lack of standardized diagnostic protocols. To address this gap, this study aims to establish a core outcome set (COS) for acute colitis in horses. The COS will provide a standardized collection of outcomes for all trials involving this condition, enhancing the consistency and comparability of research. The development process will include a scoping review of current diagnostic criteria, semi-structured interviews with experts, and a Delphi survey to reach consensus on important outcomes. The expected outcome of this study is the creation of a globally recognized COS for acute colitis, which will improve the quality of clinical trials, facilitate evidence synthesis, and advance our understanding of the disease. This standardization will benefit both researchers and veterinary practitioners, ultimately supporting better diagnosis, management, and treatment of acute colitis in horses, and improving equine health and welfare.

Arroyo, L. - Improving Methods for Detection of Intestinal Dysbiosis in Horses

Intestinal diseases are the leading cause of mortality in horses and are normally associated with microbiota changes before and during the onset of diseases or treatment with antibiotics. DNA sequencing (NGS) has been used to characterize changes in the microbiota of horses, but those technologies are relatively expensive, have a long turnaround time and require complex bioinformatic analyses. In addition, a major limitation of those techniques is the lack of absolute quantification, meaning that it is impossible to know how many bacteria were present in the feces. Recently, we have used quantitative methods to show that there were markedly lower amounts of bacteria in the feces of horses with colitis compared to healthy animals. In addition, we were able to find some bacteria that were statistically more abundant in horses that were euthanized compared to horses that survived. The objective of this study is to expand the markers that were found to be good indicators of microbial imbalances in horses with colitis. In the present study, we will conduct a multicenter study to determine if the dysbiosis present in horses with colic can be used to distinguish the type of colic and measure severity.

Arroyo, L. - The longitudinal development of the fecal microbiome and metabolome in neonatal foals

Neonatal diarrhea is a common occurrence in foals that can develop into a life-threatening condition. However, at present the etiology is poorly understood and it is unclear why diarrhea progresses in some foals whereas others recover without additional symptoms. The microbial environment within the neonatal gut rapidly becomes colonized following birth. However, several factors influence the particular microbes that are present such as location, maternal diet, and even breed, making comparisons between individuals challenging. Therefore, the metabolic

activity of gut microbes may provide a more analogous comparison and improve our understanding of bacterial function at this critical stage of gastrointestinal development. Integrating both microbial and metabolic data will enable a comprehensive understanding of how the gut environment matures in horses and what key aspects denote health. This research will also begin to reveal potential deviations from health that occur during critical bouts of diarrhea in foals. Understanding the gut microbial development in foals will advance the field of equine neonatal care and move it towards personalized treatments and therapeutics.

Avison, A. - Equine Myocardial Ion Channel Expression

Since their domestication, horses have been selected for their athletic ability. However, Thoroughbred racehorses have been estimated to have up to 260 times greater risk of sudden athletic death than human athletes. Additionally, non-fatal heart rhythm disturbances or “arrhythmias” are common in racehorses. It is estimated that at least 20% of equine sudden athletic deaths may be the result of rhythm disturbances that proved fatal. The reason horses are susceptible to these arrhythmias is not known. In order to advance our understanding of cardiac contributions to sudden athletic death, we require a greater understanding of the normal heart electrical activity in horses. As such, we aim to investigate specific proteins that are essential to the heart’s electrical activity in horses, which has never been done before, and is an essential step to understanding potential predispositions to dangerous heart rhythm disturbances. The overall goals of this project are to identify markers of cardiac dysfunction in performance horses, identify those horses most at risk for sudden cardiac death, and reduce the risk of morbidity and mortality of equine athletes.

Beeler-Marfisi, J. - Macrophage responses of healthy and severely asthmatic horses to agents that exacerbate equine asthma

Severe equine asthma (SEA) is the most common non-infectious inflammatory airway disease of mature horses. This disease causes decreased athletic ability and with progression may lead to euthanasia. Severe equine asthma is caused by exposure to airborne dusts found in the barn, including fungal spores, LPS and inorganic particulates, such as silica from soil (challenge material, Beeler-Marfisi et al. 2010). Although studied for decades, it remains unclear why some horses develop SEA while others with the same dust exposure do not. Alveolar macrophages (AMs) are the first line of defense in the lung and during inflammation, are supplemented by monocyte-derived macrophages (MDMs). Broadly speaking, AMs and MDMs are classified as pro-or anti-inflammatory based on expression of cell surface markers including CD163 and CD206, as well as patterns of protein production. In previous work comparing healthy and SEA-affected horses (Kang et al. 2021), we noted that AMs from asthmatic horses had a different immunophenotype to healthy horses suggesting a relationship between this altered immunophenotype and lung inflammation. Therefore, we believe that differences exist in AM and MDM immunophenotype and other cellular responses between healthy and SEA-affected horses which will explain why some horses become asthmatic while others do not.

Changoor, A. & Koenig, J. - Portable Electroarthrography & Biomechanical Measurement System to Evaluate Equine Cartilage Quality at the Point-of-Care

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common cause of lameness in horses and is characterized by progressive and irreversible cartilage degradation. Cartilage is the thin tissue that lines the ends of bones in joints and normally enables pain free movement. Early recognition of OA is important to be able to treat and potentially prevent disease progression, yet veterinarians have no easy way of identifying cartilage changes and objectively monitoring joint disease. Electroarthrography (EAG) is an innovative technology that evaluates cartilage through sensors placed on skin around a joint, such as the equine fetlock (metacarpophalangeal) joint. This is similar to the way heart health can be understood using electrocardiography. EAG, measured with a prototype

measurement system, successfully followed OA progression and treatment in an equine fetlock model of early OA. The prototype EAG-based measurement system used in this recent clinical study was critically evaluated to identify areas for performance improvement. The proposed research aims to create a reliable, accurate and portable EAG-based measurement system for evaluating cartilage quality at the point-of-care. We hypothesize that such a system can be created by combining existing sensor technologies in a unique way to measure both EAG and biomechanics simultaneously in real-world situations and that the system can be successfully validated against a gold-standard. This research is expected to produce a robust EAG based measurement system that can be used by equine veterinarians to evaluate cartilage health in real time. Achieving the study aims would provide a critical link to further develop EAG into a sensitive diagnostic method and dramatically improve how OA is managed in horses.

Chenier, T. - Dormant uterine Streptococcus equi spp zooepidemicus infections in broodmares: evaluating the potential diagnostic utility of cytokines and chemokines

The health of the breeding industry is critical to the overall success of the horse industry. Reproductive efficiency in horses is generally low, for a variety of reasons, including infertility caused by uterine disease. Endometritis is the third most common medical condition encountered overall in equine veterinary practice, and approximately 60% of mares affected by endometritis are barren. Given the large number of horses in the breeding sector both in Ontario and Canada as a whole, endometritis causes significant economic impact to both the Canadian and Ontario breeding industries. Causes of endometritis include acute bacterial infections, chronic infections, and persistent breeding-induced inflammation (PBIE). Some mares harbour dormant bacterial infections deep in the uterus that are difficult to diagnose and treat yet still cause infertility due to inflammation. That uterine inflammatory response can be characterized by alterations in cytokines, proteins produced by cells that have an effect on the immune system to fight disease. Levels of both pro-inflammatory and anti-inflammatory cytokines are different between mares with endometritis or degenerative endometrial fibrosis versus normal mares. Using samples collected during our recent clinical trial from mares that cultured positive for bacteria on a uterine swab, this study will evaluate uterine cytokines as a diagnostic test for identifying mares with a dormant Strep zoo bacterial infection. The results of this study could lead to earlier diagnosis and treatment, resulting in improved fertility outcomes for affected mares.

Chenier, T. - Efficacy of an Oral Supplement Containing Omega Fatty Acids for Treatment of Persistent Breeding-Induced Endometritis (PBIE) in Mares.

The health of the breeding industry is critical to the overall success of the horse industry. Reproductive efficiency in horses is generally low, for a variety of reasons, including infertility caused by uterine disease. Endometritis is the third most common medical condition encountered overall in equine veterinary practice (Traub-Dargatz et al. 1991), and approximately 60% of mares affected by endometritis are barren (Overbeck et al. 2011). Causes of endometritis include acute bacterial infections, chronic infections, and persistent breeding-induced inflammation (PBIE). PBIE is characterized by a prolonged inflammatory response following breeding, leading to early embryonic loss and infertility. A normal, transient inflammatory response occurs post-breeding; however, in a subset of susceptible mares, this inflammation persists. One study identified PBIE in 43% of a mixed population of mares and found a lower pregnancy rate in affected mares compared to normal mares (49% versus 62%; Newcombe 1997). Given the large number of horses in the breeding sector both in Ontario and Canada as a whole, endometritis and more specifically PBIE, causes a significant economic impact to both the Canadian and Ontario breeding industries. Cytokines are proteins produced by cells that have an effect on the immune system to fight disease. The uterine inflammatory response can be characterized by alterations in these cytokines. Levels of both pro-inflammatory and anti-inflammatory cytokines are different

between PBIE-susceptible versus normal mares. This study will compare uterine lavage, uterine infusion of platelet-rich plasma and oral supplementation with Omega-3 fatty acids, as treatments in mares with PBIE. Levels of several inflammatory proteins (cytokines) in the uterus will be evaluated, and clinical signs of endometritis will be assessed. The benefits of this study include potential identification of a new, effective therapy for PBIE in mares, resulting in reduced antibiotic use, improved fertility and improved understanding of this important condition.

Cote, N. - Evaluation of factors contributing to upper airway obstruction through repeated resting and dynamic respiratory endoscopies in 2-year-old Standardbreds

Identification of upper airway abnormalities at the beginning of a racing career may predict future airway obstruction and therefore the productive performance of the horse. It has been demonstrated that endoscopy at rest is not a sufficient means of evaluating underlying upper airway pathology. Therefore, a combination of resting and dynamic endoscopies is recommended to fully evaluate the upper respiratory system. It is well described in the literature that abnormalities found during post-sale endoscopies are negative predictors for future racing performance (e.g., lower earnings). Currently, it is unknown the number of yearlings racehorses that develop upper airway problems during their careers despite normal resting and dynamic endoscopic evaluation post-sale. Proposed predisposing factors for the development of upper airway disease include viral infection, pharyngeal lymphoid hyperplasia (PLH), lower airway inflammation (LAI), and exercise-induced pulmonary hemorrhage (EIPH). However, contradictory results have been reported in the literature and currently it is unknown what the contributing factors are in these individuals for the development of upper airway problems. A prospective longitudinal cohort study is needed to evaluate the number of horses that develop upper airway diseases and the contributing factors on the development of those diseases. Performing periodic resting and dynamic endoscopies may predict the development of upper airway disease and help identify factors that may play a role in their development. Furthermore, changes to the appearance of the upper airway in these young racehorses may occur under the influence of exercise and as they mature.

Gomez, D. – Hypotonic versus isotonic maintenance fluids in critically ill foals

Critically ill foals often receive maintenance intravenous fluids (IVFs) to correct and maintain normal hydration once the initial fluid resuscitation therapy has finished. Historically, administration of low-sodium (hypotonic) fluids as opposed to fluids with sodium concentration similar to those in the blood (isotonic fluids) was recommended. This practice was extrapolated from guidelines developed for healthy children in 1950s. However, this recommendation has recently been questioned in human medicine because some children can develop life-threatening low blood sodium levels. Thus, the use of isotonic fluids has increased for maintenance of hydration in ill children while the use of hypotonic fluids declined. Despite this, the current veterinary literature continues recommending hypotonic solution for maintenance IVFs in sick foals. This approach can be adequate in some cases because anecdotal reports suggest that administration of isotonic fluids to foals could lead to complications such as high levels of sodium in blood, fluid accumulation in the body, and increased blood pressure. However, these recommendations lack of evidence-based support. The objective of this study is to compare the effect of isotonic versus hypotonic maintenance fluid therapy on blood sodium concentrations, cardiovascular variables, sodium-regulating hormones, and urine production in critically ill foals. Results of this study are expected to provide data to support evidence-based protocols and the development of guidelines for fluid therapy in critically ill foals.

Gomez, D. - Fecal and serum metabolome and fecal bile acids and D-lactate concentrations in healthy horses and horses with colitis.

Colitis (inflammation of the colon resulting in diarrhea) is a serious disease in horses with high rates of morbidity and mortality. Infectious agents causative of colitis include bacteria, virus and parasites. Microbiological evaluations of feces from diarrheic horses revealed an association between some gut bacteria communities and the development of the diarrhea and the mortality of horses with colitis. However, the metabolites produced by bacteria during colitis are unknown as well their association with disease severity (i.e., mortality). Investigation of the metabolic-end products of bacterial activity will help to elucidate the significance of gut bacteria communities during inflammation of the gut. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the fecal and serum metabolites and fecal bile acids concentrations of healthy horses and horses with colitis. This research will combine several microbial and metabolic parameters to uncover the complex relationships between bacteria and gut inflammation in diarrheic horses especially in those that succumb to disease. The discovery of these novel relationships will enable the progress of targeted and individualized animal health care to improve disease prognosis and welfare.

Kerr, C. - Optimization of Perioperative Fluid Therapy in Horses: Establishing Dosing Recommendations Through Volume Kinetics

Intravenous fluids are routinely administered to healthy sedated and/or anesthetized horses to replace fluid losses and maintain tissue perfusion; however, data on their distribution and elimination are scarce. Volume kinetic analysis (VKA) is a technique used to evaluate the distribution and elimination (disposition) of fluids within body compartments. This study aims to assess the pharmacokinetics of intravenous fluids in conscious and sedated healthy horses using VKA. We hypothesize that fluid distribution and elimination will differ between conscious and sedated horses, with suboptimal distribution and elimination in both. The study will employ a randomized cross-over design with two experimental groups: a sedated group and a control group. All horses will receive intravenous fluids. Samples will be collected and VKA analysis will be performed. Results from this study will facilitate the establishment of guidelines for intravenous fluid doses and administration rates in healthy horses

Koch, T. - Mesenchymal stromal cells for the treatment of equine tendonitis

Tendon and ligament injuries are common in the equine athlete. These types of soft tissue injuries result in significant economic loss to the equine industry each year as a result of decreased performance prolonged rehabilitation, and recurrent injury. Even though tendons do heal with rest, the fibroelastic scar tissue formed is functionally deficient in comparison to more flexible tissue of normal tendons. The result is compromised performance of the horse and high re-injury rates. Currently, tendon injuries are treated in numerous ways including simple lay-off and rest, controlled rehabilitation exercise programs, shock-wave therapy, and biologics such platelet rich plasma and so-called stem cell therapies to name the most common therapies. This range of treatments reflects that no treatment has proven superior, and that adequate tendon repair remains an unmet clinical need. Culture expanded mesenchymal stromal cells (MSC) have shown promise in reducing the re-injury rate in horses suffering from tendonitis. Improved MSC efficacy may be achieved by extending the dwell time of the cells within the tendon tissue. This has the prospect of healing more horses and extending the careers of more horses suffering from tendon injuries. Improved MSC efficacy may be achieved by extending the dwell-time of the cells within the tendon tissue. Hyaluronic acid (HA) is used to extend dwell-time of cells within synovial joints. This increased dwell-time is expected to be associated with increased inflammatory modulation within the tissue and improved tissue healing.

Koenig, J. - Do Activated Umbilical Cord Blood-Derived Mesenchymal Stromal Cells Treat Equine Fetlock Osteoarthritis Effectively?

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a common, progressive joint disease in horses that leads to permanent changes in joint structure and function, often causing lameness and reducing performance in athletic horses. Current treatments manage symptoms but do not slow the disease itself. This study investigates the potential of mesenchymal stromal cells (MSCs) to treat joint inflammation in high-motion joints (fetlock or carpus) and provide longer-lasting benefits than current options. We are comparing the effectiveness of injecting either 5 million or 10 million MSCs directly into affected joints to a popular equine biological product, APS. The goal is to determine if MSCs can better relieve OA signs in horses with naturally occurring OA.

McCarrel, T. - Development of an intraluminal arytenoid abduction device (ILAD)

Recurrent laryngeal neuropathy (commonly called “roaring”) is one of the most common performance limiting diseases of the upper airway in large breed horses such as Thoroughbreds, Standardbreds, and warmbloods. The long-standing gold standard surgical treatment to improve performance in affected horses is the tie-back procedure. The tie-back requires an open surgical approach to place sutures to hold the left arytenoid cartilage in an open position called abduction. Among the most common complications of the surgery are inadequate abduction and chronic cough. Uncommon but more serious complications can include abnormal swallowing leading to lower airway contamination and reflux of saliva from the esophagus.

The use of image-guidance during surgery is becoming more common and has been shown to improve surgical accuracy, reduce post-operative morbidity, and improve outcomes in people and veterinary species. We are working towards developing a new surgical procedure that will involve placing a screw to fix the left arytenoid in an abducted position under computed tomographic (CT)-guidance through a small incision similar in size to what is typical for routine arthroscopic surgeries. It is hoped that this approach will provide more accurate implant placement with less disruption of the critical muscles and nerves of the larynx.

The focus of the current project is to develop an intraluminal abduction device (ILAD) to be able to precisely abduct the arytenoid into the desired position as confirmed on CT prior to surgery. The device would be placed into the larynx through the mouth similar to how we routinely place endotracheal tubes for horses under anesthesia. In order to develop the ILAD, we will CT larynges from numerous horses to model the shape of the lumen of the airway when the arytenoid cartilages are abducted. We will then produce models to fit various sizes of larynges and then insert the ILADs back into larynges to confirm the desired degree of abduction has been achieved on CT.

Merkies, K. and Riley, C. - Exploring the effects of equine behaviour education on equestrian behaviour and lesson horse welfare

Riding lesson facilities provide an important service in educating people about horses, shaping their understanding of horse behaviour and acceptable riding practices. However, the welfare of lesson horses is a concern as they often require more veterinary care and display more depressive or pessimistic attitudes compared to other horses. While evidence-based training methods can improve horse welfare, many equestrians are unaware of how their riding practices impact the welfare of their horse(s), and when compounded with a lack of education, often contribute to horse welfare issues.

To understand how riders perceive the emotional state of their horse, this ambitious study of 64 riders will measure the effect of a 12-week educational (Equine Guelph online course), and/or self-reflection program on rider behaviour during lessons and whether this impacts welfare-

sensitive aspects of behaviour and physiology in ridden horses. A qualitative component will explore rider attitudes, perspectives and experiences. A repeated standardized ridden test will be performed by participating riders (n=64) three times throughout the study period to measure rider behaviour and emotion-relevant equine responses. The ridden test will be conducted at the start of the study period for baseline measurements and immediately before and after the 12-week intervention to examine potential changes in rider behaviours that are associated with changes in horse responses. At the same three time points, qualitative interviews will be conducted with each participating rider to understand their attitudes and beliefs about their training and riding practices, their experiences with participating in the educational program(s) and to develop potential solutions for future behavioural change research endeavors. Qualitative interviews will also be conducted with the riding coach at the start and end of the study to explore their beliefs and attitudes toward training and coaching, how they cultivate their riding school culture, and their perception of changes in their riders after the intervention to co-construct coaching/training practices that align with horse well-being.

More research is needed on how interventions like self-reflection and education can improve interactions between equestrians and horses. Understanding these factors is essential for developing initiatives that encourage positive behavioural changes among equestrians that ultimately improve the welfare of lesson horses.

Muñoz, A. - Near-infrared display of indocyanine green in intraoperative tissue blood flow and tissue perfusion of healthy equine small intestine under laparoscopic guidance

There is no objective method for intraoperative assessment and quantification of blood perfusion in the equine gastrointestinal tract. Quantitative evaluation of indocyanine green fluorescence during laparoscopic and laparotomy surgery will enhance the precision and accuracy of real-time intraoperative visualization of blood flow and perfusion in the small intestine of healthy horses. This pilot study will set the framework for further studies of colic surgery in the clinical setting.

Physick-Sheard, P. and Pyle, G. - Factors associated with cardiac arrhythmia in Standardbred racehorses

Previous research has shown that during and immediately after racing, horses can develop potentially fatal heart rhythm disturbances. These disturbances were associated with events that could reflect changes in the horse's flight-or-fight system. In humans, emotional events can cause cardiac rhythm disturbances and in horses it is known that management can have substantial impacts on a horse's health. Sudden death is incredibly dangerous for riders, jockeys, and drivers, and jeopardizes the future use of horses in sport by decreasing public support.

Analysis of variability and rhythm in the ECG can provide insights into emotional state. We hypothesize that analysis of heart tracings (ECGs) collected from Standardbred horses before, during and after live racing can reveal evidence of stressful events. Features of the ECG will be examined to identify significant relationships with possible external sources of stress, such as late track arrival time relative to race time, duration and intensity of warmups, horse's experience level, and track footing.

All ECGs to be investigated in this study have been previously analyzed, and findings published. Severe rhythm disturbances were identified in 18% of the horses. Further analysis creates an opportunity to study potential heart rhythm risk factors. Our aim is to better understand stress-associated cardiac rhythm changes and, having confirmed the association, to highlight possible modifications to routine procedures that could decrease impacts and the risk of cardiac events, thus reducing fatalities and increasing safety.

Riley, C. - A Prospective Study of Antimicrobial Susceptibility and Multidrug Resistance in Bacteria Isolated from Diagnostic Samples from Foals in Ontario

Ontario is a major hub for horse breeding in Canada and North America, with Thoroughbred and Standardbred horses being a significant part of the industry. The success of the breeding and performance sector in Ontario depends on the survival, health, and growth of foals. Unfortunately, many neonatal foals are admitted to veterinary hospitals due to sepsis, a severe infection, and only 60 to 80% of them survive. This is a leading cause of death in young horses. The key to effectively treating these infections is to use antibiotics, but treatment often starts before the lab results are available. Therefore, it's essential to understand the likely bacteria causing the infection and their antibiotic resistance patterns. Adhering to guidelines for antibiotic use is recommended, but these guidelines should be adapted to the specific region (i.e., Ontario), as antibiotic resistance patterns differ between regions and change over time. While some studies have looked at antibiotic resistance in Ontario's horses, none have focused on neonatal foals. Investigating antibiotic resistance in sick foals is crucial to improve their survival and prevent the spread of antibiotic resistance in Ontario's horse breeding operations. We believe that antibiotic resistance patterns in sick neonatal foals in Ontario are unique, and the rates of multidrug resistance are unknown compared to other regions. We aim to identify the species of bacteria causing infections in Ontario's foals under 30 days old by studying bacteria from diagnostic samples and determining the antibiotic susceptibility patterns and the extent of multidrug resistance in the isolates from these neonatal foals.

Torrent, A. - Fecal Microbiota Transplantation in horses via Pelvic Flexure Enterotomy during Colic Surgery

Diarrhea is a common postoperative complication observed after colic surgery in horses. Diarrhea increases post-operative morbidity and is associated with abdominal pain, dehydration, electrolyte and acid-base disturbances, toxemia, sepsis, and increased risk of laminitis. Overall, represents a complication that affects the well-being of the horse, may endanger its life, prolongs hospitalization times, drains resources and increases the cost of treatment. Historically there has been limited evidence supporting the effectiveness of oral administration of microbiota from healthy donors in restoring the normal microbiota of the large intestine in horses with diarrhea. The digestive juices secreted in the stomach and small intestine, along with the fermentation processes occurring within the cecum, are the most likely cause of failure. There is conflicting evidence among studies. Recent research conducted by McKinney et al. in 2021 has endorsed the use of fecal microbiota transplant (FMT) to mitigate the severity of diarrhea in horses with colitis and enhance the diversity of the microbiome. The current research project aims to explore an alternative route of administration of microbiota in horses. Our hypothesis suggests that the direct introduction of fecal microbiota from healthy donors into the large intestine during colic surgery will be both effective and readily available to the intestine, resulting in a positive impact on the patient's microflora after surgery.

Appendix 6: Research Publications:

Arroyo, L.

Kamr A, Fortin-Trahan R, Arroyo LG, Hostnik LD, Gomez DE, Toribio RE. Markers of bone turnover, parathyroid hormone, calcium, and magnesium concentrations in horses with acute colitis. *Vet J.* 2026 Apr;316:106595. doi: 10.1016/j.tvjl.2026.106595. Epub 2026 Feb 16. PMID: 41702195.

Cooper CJ, Arroyo LG, Hammermueller JD, Botts MM, Pearl DL, Wootton SK, Lillie BN. Molecular prevalence of equine alphaherpesvirus-1 shedding in healthy broodmares in Ontario. *Can J Vet Res.* 2026 Jan 1;90(1):16-24. PMID: 41585008; PMCID: PMC12825682.

Arantes JA, Di Pietro R, Ratté M, Arroyo LG, Leclère M, Costa MC. Changes in bacterial viability after preparation and storage of fecal microbiota transplantation solution using equine feces. *PeerJ.* 2025 Feb 20;13:e18860. doi: 10.7717/peerj.18860. PMID: 39989751; PMCID: PMC11847485.

Avison, A.

Avison A, Pyle G, Sears W, Physick-Sheard P. QT interval and cardiac restitution dynamics in racehorses: Observations during maximal effort. *American Journal of Physiology – Heart and Circulatory Physiology.* 2026; 330(4): H1211-H1221. <https://doi.org/10.1152/ajpheart.00785.2025>.

Avison A, Goderre B, Pyle G, Physick-Sheard P. QT interval and cardiac restitution ratio complexity in Standardbred racehorses from rest to maximal effort: Insights into arrhythmia risk. *Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine.* 2025; 39:e70207. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jvim.70207>.

Avison A, Physick-Sheard P, Pyle G. Performance horses as a model for exercise-associated cardiac arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death. *Journal of Molecular and Cellular Cardiology Plus.* 2025; 12: 100452. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmccpl.2025.100452>

Koenig, J.

RM Luque, N Mortagy, TC McCorkell, AH Alizadeh, KA Russell, J Beeler-Marfisi, LR Goodrich, G Monteith, A Valverde, H Dobson, A zur Linden, A Giraldo, TG Koch, JB Koenig. Cord blood mesenchymal stromal cells combined with hyaluronic acid are both symptom- and disease-modifying in an equine osteoarthritis fetlock chip model, 2026, *Frontiers* (under submission)

A Valverde, T Moreira, A Torrent-Crosa, A Daw, JB Koenig (2026) Comparison of quality of induction and recovery and arterial blood pressure in horses anesthetized with diazepam or guaifenesin co-induction combined with xylazine and ketamine and maintained on isoflurane. *Canadian Journal of Veterinary Research* (in press)

Henderson ARP, Valverde A, Koenig J, Sears W. Effects of anesthetic protocol, procedure, recovery stall, and interval on the quality of recovery in repeatedly anesthetized horses. *Can J Vet Res* 2025; 89:17-25. PMID: 39744466

Merkies, K.

Oberhammer A, Copelin C, Rabel L, Merkies K. 2026. Behind the bridle: Understanding facial expressions in lesson horses before and after riding. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, 300, 106982. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2026.106982>

Copelin C, Merkies K. 2025. The face of the Canadian riding lesson industry—common management practices and industry opinions. *Canadian Journal of Animal Science*. 105: 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1139/cjas-2025-0008>

Munevar Luque R., Henderson B., McCorkell T., Alizadeh A., Russell K., Koch T., Koenig J. Treatment outcomes for equine osteoarthritis with mesenchymal stromal cells and hyaluronic acid, *Equine Veterinary Journal Special Focus Edition 2025*

R. Peter Suderman, Jaylon Pascual, T. Connor McCorkell, Rodrigo Munevar Luque, Judith Koenig, Adele Changoor. Non-invasive Electroarthrography Tracks Cartilage Injury and Correlates to Clinical Outcomes in an Equine Model of Osteoarthritis, *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage*, 2026

Riley, C.

Daniela Espinosa Seone, Christopher Buce Riley, Daniel G Kenney, Ashley Spencer and Luis Guillermo Arroyo. A high proportion of bacterial isolates from septic neonatal foals in Ontario express multidrug resistance and low susceptibility to first-line antimicrobials. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* (accepted for publication)
<http://doi.org/10.2460/javma.25.05.0339>

Valverde, A.

Valverde A; Moreira T; Torrent A; Dawn A; Koenig J, Comparison of quality of induction and recovery and arterial blood pressure in horses anesthetized with diazepam or guaifenesin co-induction combined with xylazine and ketamine and maintained on isoflurane, *Can J Vet Res* (accepted June 2026; In press)

Henderson ARP, Valverde A, Marchiori J, Tisotti T, Torrent A, Côté N, Gomez D. Effect of rapid and slow intravenous administration of sodium penicillin on arterial blood pressure in isoflurane-anesthetized horses during surgery. *Vet Anaesth Analg* 2025; 52:200–207. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaa.2025.01.001>

Appendix 7: Research Presentations

Arroyo, L.

(Forthcoming) Identification of virulence factors of *Escherichia coli* found in horses with undifferentiated colitis. Laurie Boucher, Marcio Costa, Luis Arroyo, Mathilde Leclere, Maud de Lagarde. Poster research abstract presentation, June 11 and Friday, June 12 at the 2026 ACVIM Forum in Seattle, Washington.

Avison, A.

(Forthcoming) Avison A*, Pyle G, Physick-Sheard P. Alterations in QT interval and cardiac restitution ratio in Thoroughbred racehorses during the peri-race period. Calgary International Equine Symposium. September 2025. Calgary, Alberta. International presentation in which I was awarded first place.

Avison A*, Pyle G, Physick-Sheard P. QT interval and cardiac restitution ratio dynamics during maximal effort in Thoroughbred racehorses. Ontario Veterinary College Graduate Student Symposium. July 2025. Guelph, Ontario.

Beeler-Marfisi, J.

Čeko S, Lui Y, Slater J, Beeler-Marfisi J. Ozone Exposure Is Associated with Exercise-induced Pulmonary Hemorrhage Risk and Severity in Ontario Racehorses. American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine, ePoster Presentation. Thursday June 11, 2026

Koenig, J.

RM Luque, N Mortagy, TC McCorkell, TG Koch, H Alizadeh, K Russell, J Beeler-Marfisi, L Goodrich, G Monteith, A Valverde, H Dobson, A Zur Linden, A Giraldo, JB Koenig. Mesenchymal stromal cells for the treatment of equine fetlock osteoarthritis, Calgary Equine Symposium 2025, Podium presentation.

RM Luque, N Mortagy, TC McCorkell, TG Koch, H Alizadeh, K Russell, J Beeler-Marfisi, L Goodrich, G Monteith, A Valverde, H Dobson, A Zur Linden, A Giraldo, JB Koenig. Mesenchymal stromal cells for the treatment of equine fetlock osteoarthritis, NAVRMA Conference 2025, poster.

R. Peter Suderman, Josephine Lui, T. Connor McCorkell, Rodrigo Munevar Luque, Judith Koenig, Adele Changoor. Effects of Acute Synovitis on Electroarthrography in an Equine Lipopolysaccharide Model, Orthopaedic Research Society Annual Meeting 2025, (Abstract) Poster.

Merkies, K.

Copelin C, Rabel L, Merkies K. IMPACT OF RIDER LEVELS AND HORSE EXPERIENCE ON HEART RATE VARIABILITY IN RIDING LESSON HORSES. International Society of Applied Ethology – North America conference, May 2025, Guelph, ON. (poster presentation)

Oberhammer A, Copelin C, Rabel L, Merkies K. BEHIND THE BRIDLE: UNDERSTANDING FACIAL EXPRESSIONS IN HORSES BEFORE AND AFTER RIDING. International Society for Equitation Science annual conference, July 2025, Fort Collins, Colorado, USA. (oral presentation) Page 38

Copelin C, Rabel L, Merkies K. LEARNING ABOUT LESSON HORSES: THE INFLUENCE OF RIDER LEVEL ON HEART RATE VARIABILITY PARAMETERS AND UNDER SADDLE BEHAVIOUR IN RIDING LESSON HORSES DURING WORK. International Society for Equitation Science annual conference, July 2025, Fort Collins, Colorado, USA. (oral presentation). Page 60

Copelin C, Rabel L, Merkies K. IMPACT OF RIDER LEVELS AND HORSE EXPERIENCE ON HEART RATE VARIABILITY IN RIDING LESSON HORSES. International Society of Applied Ethology Congress, August 2025, Utrecht, Netherlands (poster with short presentation) page 251

Riley, C.

2026 46th Bain Fallon Memorial Lectures/ANZCVS Conference. “A prospective study of antimicrobial susceptibility of bacterial isolates from sick neonatal foals.” Christopher B. Riley, Daniela Espinosa Seoane, Daniel G. Kenney, Ashley Spencer, Luis G. Arroyo. 19-23rd July 2026. (submitted; awaiting confirmation)

2026 Clinical Studies Graduate Student Experiential Design Seminar Presentations “Veterinary perceptions on the effects of illness and injury on the horse’s mental state.” Alessia Masini. 13th May 2026

2025 ACVIM Forum. Poster presentation “A prospective study of bacterial antimicrobial susceptibility and multidrug resistance for isolates from sick neonatal foals.” Daniela Espinosa Seone, Christopher B Riley, Daniel Kenney, Ashley Spencer and Luis Arroyo. 19- 21st June 2025, Louisville, KY, USA. Abstract E49 p.69

2025 Centre for Public Health and Zoonoses Symposium. Oral presentation “Antimicrobial susceptibility of bacterial isolates recovered from sick neonatal foals”, Daniela Espinosa Seone, Christopher B Riley, Daniel Kenney, Ashley Spencer and Luis Arroyo. 21st May 2025, OVC, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON.

Appendix 8: Presentations and Talks Given by Equine Guelph

Presentations & Talks by Gayle Ecker

G. Ecker, “A Journey Through the Horse’s Gut”. Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association (CanTRA) 45th Anniversary Conference – Puslinch, ON, May 2 – 4, 2025

Presentation by Dr. Shane Bateman, “Veterinary Forensics Webinar, presented by Dr. Shane Bateman in partnership with Equine Guelph. September 18, 2025

Presentations & Talks by Dr. Susan Raymond

S. Raymond, “Fire Prevention & Emergency Preparedness”, Undergraduate degree BBRM (EQN 3070), January 21, 2026, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON



Appendix 9: Educational Offerings by Equine Guelph

Educational Courses offered by Equine Guelph and Open Learning and Educational Support

Advanced Equine Health through Nutrition (Instructor: Dr. Kathleen Crandell PhD)
Advanced Equine Behaviour (Instructor: Dr. Robin Foster PhD)
Equine Behaviour (Instructor: Zoë Thorbergson MSc & Cathy Wentworth-Stanley MSc)
Equine Business Finance and Risk Management (Instructor: Dr. Julie Fischer MBA, D.M.)
Equine Business Management (Instructors: Rachael Hunter MBA & Christine Polhkamp)
Equine Event Management (Instructor: Shellie Kwitkowski MBA)
Equine Genetics (Instructor: Dr. Dianne Winkelman-Sim PhD)
Equine Journalism (Instructor: Anna Sochocky, MA)
Equine Nutrition (Instructor: Dr. Shannon Pratt-Phillips PhD)
Equine Welfare (Instructor: Gayle Ecker MSc)
Exercise Physiology (Instructor: Brittany Davis DVM)
Equine Functional Anatomy (Instructor: Jennifer MacNicol, PhD)
Global Perspectives in Equid Welfare (Instructor: Dr. Tamara Tadich, PhD DVM)
Management of the Broodmare, Stallion and Foal (Instructor: Catherine Williams, ResM)
Equine Health & Disease Prevention (Instructor: Dr. Ev Post DVM)
Management of the Equine Environment (Instructors: Dr. Susan Raymond PhD & Cathy Wentworth-Stanley MSc)
Marketing & Communications in the Equine Industry (Instructor: TBA)
Stewardship of the Equine Environment (Instructor: Dr. Susan Raymond PhD)
The Equine Industry (Instructor: Gayle Ecker MSc)

Short Online courses (21) offered by Equine Guelph on TheHorsePortal.ca

Careers in the Horse World for Youth (On-Demand)
Conditioning the Racehorse (Instructor: Dr Ian Moore, DVM)
Equine Business 101 (On-Demand)
Equine First Aid (Instructor: Dr. Laura Frost, DVM)
Fire and Emergency Preparedness (Instructor: Dr Susan Raymond, PhD; Dr Rebecca Husted, PhD)
Gut Health and Colic/Ulcer Prevention (Instructor: Dr Jennifer MacNicol, PhD)
Horse Behaviour and Safety (Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Husted, PhD)
Horse Behaviour and Safety for Youth (On-Demand)
Horse Care and Welfare (Instructor: Gayle Ecker, MSc)
Horse Care and Welfare (On-Demand)
Horse Trailer Safety (Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Husted)
Introduction to Body Condition Scoring (On-Demand)
Introduction to Body Condition Scoring (Instructor: Dr Jennifer MacNicol, PhD)
Large Animal Emergency Rescue Awareness Level (On-Demand)
Provincial Foundations Officials Course (On-Demand)
Racehorse Lameness & Injury Prevention and Care (Instructor: Dr. Melissa McKee, DVM)
Sickness Prevention in Horses (Instructor: Dr Susan Raymond, PhD)
Sickness Prevention in Horses (On-Demand)
Sport Horse Lameness & Injury Prevention and Care (Instructor: Dr. Bri Henderson, DVM)
The Senior Horse (Instructor: Dr. Bettina Bobsien, DVM)

Appendix 10: Summary of the Equine Studies program

Certificate and Diploma programs below [reflect a change](#) from the School of Continuing Studies, effective 1 January 2026. Visit the School of Continuing Studies site for [more information](#).

Diploma in Equine Studies

Requirements: 8 online courses including 4 core & 4 elective

Comprehensive course of study suitable for those interested in a career in the equine industry
Will augment the resumes of those who have been in the industry
Will provide a foundation for those just entering the industry.

Equine Science Certificate

Requirements: 4 online courses including 1 core & 3 elective

Designed to help you improve the management and welfare of horses in the industry
Courses based on scientific research and are presented in a practical format, making it easy for you to directly apply what you have learned to the health and performance of your horse.

Certificate in Equine Business Management

Requirements: 4 online courses including 1 core & 3 elective

For anyone interested in working in the business and management aspects of the equine industry
You will learn the tools necessary to achieve your goal of a successful equine business.

Equine Welfare Certificate

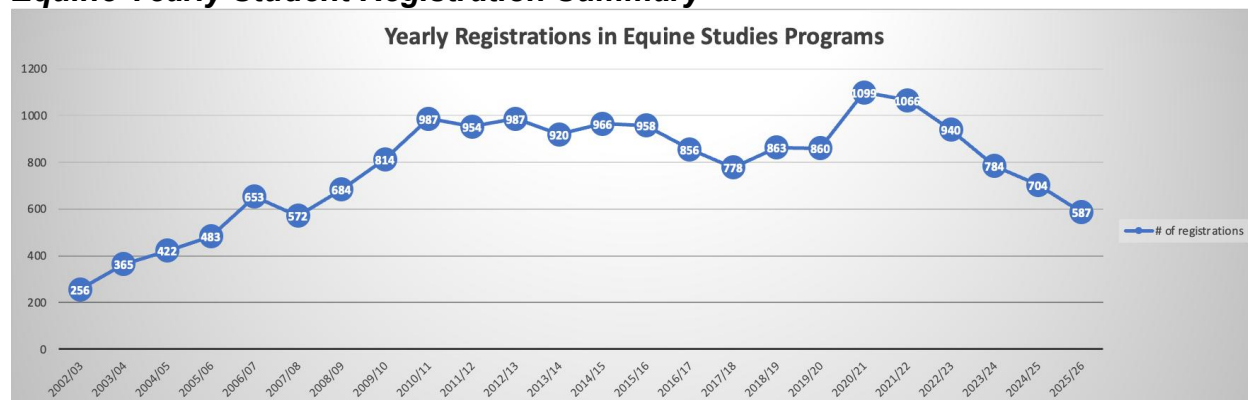
Requirements: 4 online courses including 1 core & 3 elective

The Equine Welfare Certificate is offered by the Campbell Centre for the Study of Animal Welfare, Equine Guelph, and the School of Continuing Studies at the University of Guelph. For those who wish to examine the science behind what is required to support sound management and welfare practices for horses in Canada and around the globe. The Equine Welfare Certificate will help you discover solutions to the behavior and health problems horses face because of our management practices.

2025– 2026 Student Registration Profile

New students	189
Total Individual Students	352
Total Number of registrations	587

Equine Yearly Student Registration Summary



Yearly Student Registration All Programs and Courses

Year	# of registrations	Projections	# of Unique Students
2002 - 2003	256	180	
2003 - 2004	365	360	
2004 - 2005	422	480	
2005 - 2006	483	540	
2006 - 2007	653	760	
2007 - 2008	572	600	
2008 - 2009	684	710	
2009 - 2010	814	888	
2010 - 2011	987	1009	503
2011 - 2012	954	949	524
2012 - 2013	987	1125	487
2013 - 2014	920	1110	503
2014 - 2015	966	995	516
2015 - 2016	958	975	530
2016 - 2017	856	975	540
2017 - 2018	778	900	545
2018 - 2019	863	920	562
2019 - 2020	860	920	516
2020 - 2021	1099	1000	607
2021 - 2022	1066	1000	707
2022 - 2023	940	1000	596
2023 – 2024	784	1000	446
2024 – 2025	704	950*	393
2025 – 2026	587		352

*Projection based on last 5 years registrations numbers

New Students by Semester

S25	43
F25	74
W26	72
Total New Students	189

Enrollment Count Reporting

Summer 2025

Advanced Equine Behaviour	11
Equine Behaviour	28
Equine Business Finance & Risk Management	11
Equine Event Management	9
Equine Exercise Physiology	39
Equine Nutrition	24
Global Perspectives in Equid Welfare	11
Total enrollment Summer 2025	155

Fall 2025

Equine Behaviour	54
Equine Business Management	23
Equine Health & Disease Prevention	34
Equine Journalism	7
Equine Welfare	24
Management of Broodmare, Stallion and Foal	24
Management of the Equine Environment	18
Stewardship of the Equine Environment	32
Total enrollment Fall 2025	216

Winter 2026

Advanced Equine Health through Nutrition	10
Equine Functional Anatomy	44
Equine Genetics	28
Equine Health & Disease Prevention	23
Equine Nutrition	42
Management of the Equine Environment	42
Marketing & Communications in the Equine Industry (cancelled)	0
The Equine Industry	27
Total enrollment Winter 2026	216

TOTAL ENROLLMENTS

587

Equine Welfare Certificate Courses

The Equine Welfare Certificate is a partnership between Equine Guelph, Campbell Centre for the Study of Animal Welfare and Open Learning and Educational Support.

Course	Semester	# of registrations
Global Perspectives in Equid Welfare	S25	11
Equine Welfare	F25	24
	TOTAL	35

Course Distribution

Number of courses offered each year

Year	Courses
2002 - 2003	4
2003 - 2004	6
2004 - 2005	8
2005 - 2006	9
2006 - 2007	13
2007 - 2008	10
2008 - 2009	12
2009 - 2010	16
2010 - 2011	19
2011 - 2012	21
2012 - 2013	24
2013 - 2014	21
2014 - 2015	22
2015 - 2016	22
2016 - 2017	23
2017 - 2018	21
2018 - 2019	26
2019 - 2020	22
2020 - 2021	22
2021 - 2022	23
2022 - 2023	24
2023 - 2024	23
2024 - 2025	23
2025 - 2026	23

Different individual courses available

Year	Courses
2002 - 2003	3
2003 - 2004	4
2004 - 2005	6
2005 - 2006	7
2006 - 2007	8
2007 - 2008	7
2008 - 2009	11
2009 - 2010	14
2010 - 2011	15
2011 - 2012	17
2012 - 2013	19
2013 - 2014	16
2014 - 2015	17
2015 - 2016	17
2016 - 2017	18
2017 - 2018	16
2018 - 2019	17
2019 - 2020	14
2020 - 2021	17
2021 - 2022	17
2022 - 2023	17
2023 - 2024	18
2024 - 2025	17
2025 - 2026	19

Where Students Are Coming From

Canadian Students (enrolled)

AB	34
BC	38
MB	6
NB	11
NL	5
NS	18
ONT	153
PE	4
QC	30
SK	4
YT	1
TOTAL	304

International Students (enrolled)

Australia	1
Austria	1
Belgium	1
Columbia	1
Denmark	2
Germany	1
Hungary	1
Japan	3
Mexico	1
Mozambique	1
New Zealand	2
Norway	1
Peru	1
Singapore	1
Spain	2
UK	2
TOTAL	22

US Students (enrolled)

CA	4
CO	1
FL	1
MD	2
MI	2
NC	1
NY	1
OR	1
PA	2
Puerto Rico	1
SC	1
TN	1
TX	4
UT	1
VA	1
WA	2
TOTAL	26

Registered Unique Students by Geographic Location

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	2025/ 26
CAN	459	442	461	451	424	428	428	387	469	573	498	360	320	304
US	31	54	38	44	56	40	40	94	88	93	62	57	46	26
INT	13	20	23	45	45	80	94	50	50	40	37	29	24	22
	503	516	522	540	525	548	562	572	607	706	597	446	390	352

Graduates of our Certificates and Diploma Program of Studies

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>ESC</i>	<i>CEBM</i>	<i>DipES</i>	<i>WEL</i>
2004/05	36	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005/06	27	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006/07	32	n/a	n/a	n/a
2007/08	25	n/a	n/a	n/a
2008/09	38	n/a	n/a	n/a
2009/10	20	n/a	22	n/a
2010/11	30	2	13	n/a
2011/12	30	6	23	n/a
2012/13	28	7	29	n/a
2013/14	19	9	25	n/a
2014/15	21	6	20	n/a
2015/16	50	14	38	3
2016/17	27	6	34	3
2017/18	15	8	29	4
2018/19	20	10	27	8
2019/20	31	13	49	7
2020/21	18	4	37	3
2021/22	13	2	23	4
2022/23	13	4	39	8
2023/24	22	9	29	7
2024/25	13	7	26	6
2025/26	7	3	26	9
	535	110	489	62

ESC – Equine Science Certificate

CEBM – Certificate in Equine Business Management

DipES – Equine Studies Diploma

WEL – Certificate in Equine Welfare

The Horse Portal Course Offering Overview 2025-2026

Course	Enrollment Total	Enrollment PTSO	# Paid Students	% Paid Enrollment	Revenue
The Senior Horse – F25	30	10	17	57%	\$2,308
Horse Care & Welfare – F25	26	6	17	65%	\$1,904
Equine First Aid - F25	34	8	15	44%	\$2,388
Horse Trailer Safety - F25	17	3	16	94%	\$994
Horse Behaviour & Safety – F25	26	6	22	85%	\$1,333
Fire and Emergency Preparedness – F25*	42	3	2	5%	\$651
Introduction to Body Cond. Scoring – W26	22	4	12	55%	\$969
Racehorse Lameness/Injury Prev. W26**	101	-	2	1%	\$190
Gut Health & Colic Prev. W26	26	15	25	96%	\$2,176
Conditioning the Racehorse – W26**	160	-	7	5%	\$671
Sport Horse Injury/Lameness - W26**	170	36	12	7%	\$1,002
Equine First Aid – S26	32	13	31	97%	\$2,655
Horse Trailer Safety S26**	45	10	44	98%	\$1,440
Equine Business 101 On Demand	41	7	41	100%	\$1,758
Introduction to BCS On Demand*	51	6	25	47%	\$969
Horse Care & Welfare On Demand	34	12	22	65%	\$1,321
Large Animal Emerg. Rescue – On Demand***	58	4	8	29%	\$360
Sickness Prevention On Demand	16	3	9	82%	\$520
Provincial Officials Course – On Demand	12	9	12	100%	\$975
Careers in the Horse World – On Demand	64	1	15	19%	\$371
Horse Behaviour & Safety for Youth – On Demand**	286	0	20	7%	\$500
Total	1293	156	374	29%	\$25,734

**Course offered free to EQN1010 Students*

***Course registrations available for free with use of coupon, through partnership with sponsor*

****Offered free as bonus course for in-person LAER registrants*

Course Enrollment Stats

Year	Total Enrollment	Federation Enrollment	% Federation Enrollment
2016-2017	58	35	60%
2017-2018	434	207	48%
2018-2019	681	333	49%
2019-2020	1153	155	13%
2020-2021	1626	182	11%
2021-2022	2817	289	10%
2022-2023	1163	158	14%
2023-2024	1691	161	9%
2024-2025	1345	178	13%
2025-2026	1293	156	12%

Provincial Breakdown

PTSO	Registered Students – 2025-26
Alberta (AEF)	26
British Columbia (HCBC)	22
Manitoba (MHC)	6
New Brunswick (NBEA)	3
Newfoundland (NLEA)	1
Nova Scotia (ENS)	24
Ontario (OE)	69
Prince Edward Island (IHC)	1
Saskatchewan (SHF)	3
Yukon (EAY)	1
Totals	156
% of Registrations:	12%

Appendix 11: Equine Guelph's Promotional Events

Displays and Events for Equine Guelph programs

Events Calendar – 2025-26

Equine Guelph at Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association (CanTRA) 45th Anniversary Conference – Puslinch, ON, May 2 – 4, 2025

Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) Awareness Level Course - Mildmay Fire Department, Mildmay, ON, July 12, 2025

Horse Capades – EquiMania! Display, CNE, Toronto, ON, Aug 3-14, 2025

Industry Day at Grand River Raceway, Elora, ON, Aug 4, 2025

LAER Awareness Level Courses - Whinny Hills Equestrian Centre, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, August 15-16, 2025

LAER Awareness Level Courses – UPEI, PEI, August 19-20, 2025

Minnesota Fair – EquiMania! Display, Minnesota, Aug 21 – Sept 1, 2025

LAER Awareness Level Course – Grand River Raceway, Elora, ON, October 17, 2025

AgScape Career Competition: Nov 26 – 27, 2025

LAER Awareness Level Course for 4th year veterinary students - University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, March 6, 2026

LAER Awareness Level Course for AGCO licensed racetrack veterinarians – Woodbine Racetrack, Toronto, ON, March 12, 2026

Erin Movie Night - Equine Guelph display, Erin, ON, April 1, 2026

Appendix 12: Media Coverage Summary

Topic	Articles (May 1, 2025-April 30, 2026)
Research	73
Education	145
Special Projects	62
EquiMania!	2

Coverage of Special Events, Programs or Research Projects

Topic	Articles (May 1, 2025- April 30, 2026)
Large Animal Emergency Rescue Training	23
Ontario Racing Launches Horse eCamp for Kids	19
Free Online Courses for Racing	14
Horse Owner Healthcare Tools	14
Be Proactive Not Reactive when it comes to Biosecurity	12
Teaching Vets to Recognize Equine Cruelty	12
Preventing Recurring Colic	11
Ontario Equine Economic Impact Survey	10
Free Safety & Behaviour Course for Youth	8
Roaring and Possible New Surgical Procedure	7
BGRA Youth Derby (EG youth course prize)	6
Survey Reveals Challenges in Managing Horse Weight	6

Total Features: Over 282

100% of 43 media releases sent out by Equine Guelph this fiscal year were picked up for further distribution. Equine Guelph's releases are distributed to a media list of over 160 equine media outlets including national and provincial associations and partners and a growing number of personal social media sites from our students to disseminate our communications to industry participants in Ontario and worldwide. This network includes Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube. Our database for E-news subscribers is over 8,000 with open rates averaging 54%; well above the industry average.

Equine Guelph's investment in membership with American Horse Publications (AHP) has given a much wider audience with their distribution of 2 media articles per month which are then distributed to a broad list of U.S. equine publications.

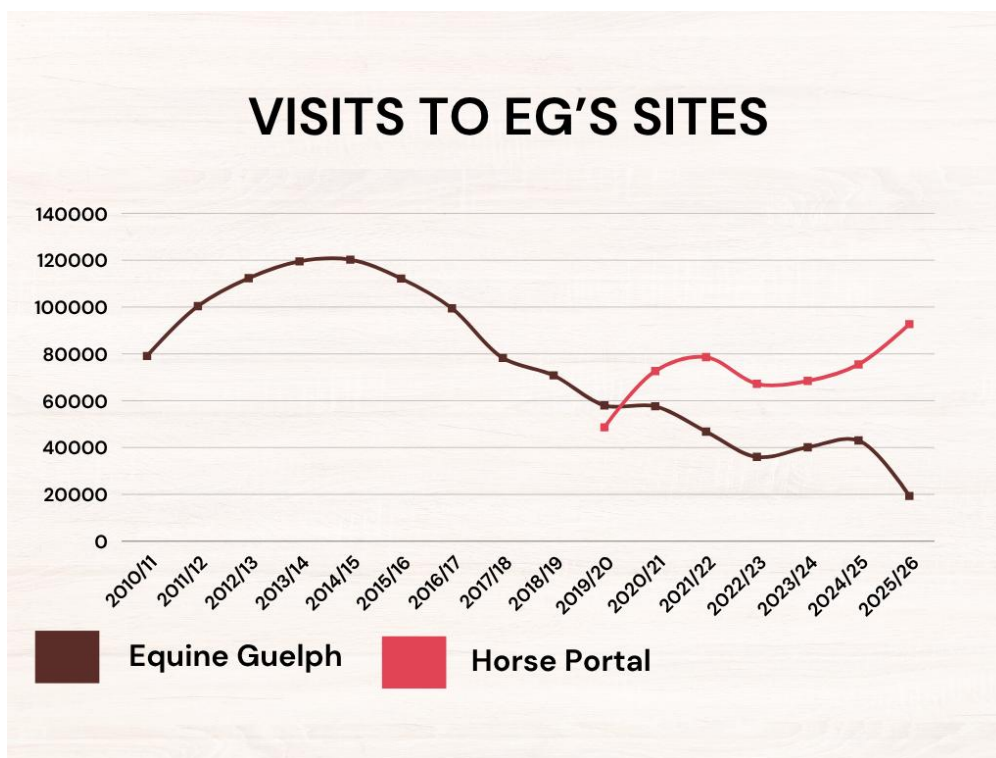
Some of our top followers include: Paulick Report, The Rider, Horse Journals, Horse Sport, Horse-Canada, Quarter Horse Racing Owners Ontario, and Standardbred Canada.

Other noteworthy pick up includes: European Trainer and North American Trainer magazine, Equine Info Exchange, EquusMagazine.com (USA media partner of the American Association of Equine Practitioners), Equine Science Update (UK with global distribution), HorseNation.com (USA with global reach), Eventing Nation, Northwest Horse Source (Colorado USA), Double D Trailers (USA), Vet.Purdue.edu (USA), EquiMed, AmericanFarriers.com, Equine Chronicle (USA), Equine Disease Communications Center (USA), AQHA (USA), and Everything Horse UK magazine.

Appendix 13: Web Site Report

May 1, 2025 – April 30, 2026

	Equine Guelph	TheHorsePortal.ca
Visits/Sessions	19,332	92,698
Page Views	26,971	257,736



Equine Guelph growth chart for our websites over the years

CONTENT

TOP LANDING PAGES. (*Behaviour – Site Content – Landing Pages*)

	Top 10 You Tube Videos May 01, 2025 – April 30, 2026
1	Rescue from Horse Trailer Large Animal Emergency Rescue (short)
2	LAER drag/slide technique NS (short)
3	LAER - Cast Horse Roll technique
4	LAMENESS LAB - CASE 1 – ASSESSMENT
5	LAER Forward Assist Technique
6	Horse Behaviour Portal online course (short)
7	LAER – The Emergency Halter - How to create a halter for a loose horse - Dr. Susan Raymond
8	The Emergency Halter - How to create a halter for a loose horse - Dr. Susan Raymond
9	Lameness Lab – signs a horse may be lame – Dr. Nicola Cribb
10	Video Challenge - CASE 1 – ASSESSMENT – Lameness Lab

Equine JobTrack Pages	Views	Users
EquineJobTrack.ca	30,681	8,432
Start Job Search	11,435	5,291
Browse All Jobs	4,797	2,238
Employer dashboard	632	230
Post a Job	561	111

Equine JobTrack continues to be an important website for the equine industry.

Appendix 14: Sponsors

Equine Guelph would like to thank the following sponsors for their contributions and support of Equine Guelph's program.



Quarter Report - Q4, Equine Guelph, 2025-2026 FY

Operating Accounts:

As at 30 April 2026

Revenue-Expense	Category	Type	YTD
REVENUE			
	GENERAL REVENUE	HORSE PORTAL, LAR, OEEEP, GRANTS, ETC.	-\$223,689
		MINNESOTA - EQUIMANIA SALE	-\$171,075
		OPEN-ED - 12 WK COURSE TUITION	-\$51,081
			-\$445,846
TRANSFERS			
	TRANSFERS	FUND TRANSFER - HIP/QH/HBPA RES. SUPPORT	-\$38,000
		SPONSORSHIP, GRAS, Edu Donations, C. Kerr	-\$236,000
			-\$274,000
EXPENSES			
	PERSONNEL	SALARIES/BENEFITS - EG STAFF	\$647,770
	OPERATING	EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR (STAFF, HON'S)	\$86,845
		HORSE PORTAL REG - VISA/MC FEES	\$1,428
		LEASE AND RENTAL PMTS - PRINTER	\$931
		OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$1,600
		SUPPLIES- DATA PROCESSING/COMPUTERS	\$5,514
		PRINTING AND PUBLICATION CHARGES	\$8,237
		UofG PHONE SERVICES, PARKING, MAILING	\$9,812
		TRAVEL/RELOCATION/HOSPITALITY	\$18,802
		MISCELLANEOUS SUPPLIES	\$3,216
		MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	\$3,818
Sub-Total			\$140,202
		TOTAL EQUINE GUELPH 2025-2026	\$68,126
		OVC EQUINE GUELPH BUDGET ALLOCATION	-\$70,408
		2024-2025 BUDGET CARRYFORWARD	-\$1,996
		TOTAL EQUINE GUELPH CARRYFORWARD	-\$4,278

EQUINE GUELPH - Funds Held in Alumni House / OVC Endowment Accounts

As at: 30 Apr 2026

Donation/Sponsorship Accounts	Acct #	Total	Notes
Education	802091	\$56,457	2nd installment of new agreement will be in Q1
Sponsorship	802811	\$82,075	
Area of Greatest Need	802089	\$161,086	
For The Herd	803694	\$1,355	
JobTrack, LAR (GRAS)	803914	\$175	
OE Welfare Fund	802764	\$7,072	
Total		\$308,220	Available Expendable
Endowment Accounts			
Kerr Fund for Eq. Education	710859	\$97,516	
Estate of Donna Moore	710934	\$459,660	
Research Donations			
	802092	\$10,786	
Scholarship Accounts			
Roger L'Heureux	803258	\$6,330	
Stuart Stocks	803240	\$555	

Equine Guelph Financial Report - Research Program							
As at: 30 April 2026							
	EP TAYLOR		HIP/QH		HBPA		Donations/Other
Account Number:	710655		045878		046071		022298
FUND BALANCE, Previous Year End	\$70,487		\$41,160		\$18,047		\$0
REVENUE							
EP Taylor Endowment	\$105,606		-		-		\$105,606
HIP/QR Allocation	-		\$125,000		-		\$125,001
HBPA Allocation	-		-		\$65,000		\$65,000
Donna Moore Endowment	-		-		-		\$32,000
Donations	-		-		-		\$0
TOTAL REVENUE	\$105,606		\$125,000		\$65,000		\$327,607
INTERNAL TRANSFERS							
HIP/QH Admin Support (20%)	-		-\$25,000		-		-\$25,000
HBPA Admin Support (20%)	-		-		-\$13,000		-\$13,000
Other	-		-		-		\$0
TOTAL TRANSFERS	\$0		-\$25,000		-\$13,000		-\$38,000
PROGRAM EXPENDITURES							
Research Project Allocations	-\$37,936		-\$111,728		-\$25,948		-\$207,612
Peer Review Honorariums	-\$3,238						-\$3,238
Other Expenses (Travel, etc.)							\$0
	-\$41,174		-\$111,728		-\$25,948		-\$210,850
FUND BALANCE as at 30 April 2026	\$134,918		\$29,432		\$44,099		\$208,449

1 - Offsetting Journal Entries - K. Boddner research transfer