

Irish Thoroughbred  
Welfare Council



# Our Industry, Our Standards

Principles of Animal Welfare  
In Ireland's Horse Racing Industry







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The Principles and Criteria from Welfare Quality® were adapted by participants from Ireland's Horse Racing Industry



# Introduction

The Irish Thoroughbred Welfare Council was created by HRI in 2020 to drive policy in the critical area of Equine Welfare.

**In 2021 HRI engaged with industry's participants including breeders, jockeys, owners, stable staff and trainers through a series of co-design workshops. From these workshops an infographic was created to describe the four principles for good equine welfare.**

The objective of the workshops was to put current best-practice science into language, principles and criteria which are real and coherent. Participants at the co-design workshops spoke openly about current good practice and how it could be used to develop standards for equine welfare in Ireland.

This infographic (left) shows the four principles adapted from the Welfare Quality®<sup>1</sup> programme of Good Feeding, Good Housing, Good Health, and Good Well-being which are accepted as an accurate synopsis of modern equine welfare thinking in Ireland. The criteria within each principle have been suggested by participants as the matters contributing most to the welfare of a thoroughbred racehorse. Attached to these are suggestions for measurement of the criteria.

**We see high standards of care every day in the thoroughbred industry, not just in the performance of the horses and the international success, but in the day-to-day routines practiced by our extensive workforce.**

The objective is to create a system where welfare standards are verified and measured, a system which stands up to scrutiny, recognises good work, encourages improvement and highlights the best way forward.

This booklet describes these principles as they apply to an Irish stable yard. We will also address some of the issues which have raised questions from industry participants most notably around end of racing career options, euthanasia, and emergency response.

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<sup>1</sup> Blokhuys, H.J., I. Veissier, M. Miele and R. B. Jones, 2010. The Welfare Quality® project and beyond: safeguarding farm animal well-being. Acta Agriculturae Scandinavica A, Animal Science, 60, 129-140.







# Good Feeding

Each horse has individual requirements and feeding of horses is dependent on multiple factors;

- ◆ quality, energy density and protein content of the feed
- ◆ quality and nutritional value of the forage (grass, hay or haylage)
- ◆ age of the horse
- ◆ size and weight of the horse
- ◆ workload of the horse and environmental factors



**Water:** Water is an essential component of a horse's diet. Physiological changes that affect the health of a horse are brought about by thirst, which shows that access to water is more urgent than shortage of food. Prolonged water deprivation can lead to dehydration and colic.



**Tailored Diet:** In the context of equine welfare a key is our ability to tailor the diet to reflect the workload, character, and environment of each horse. Feeding unsuitable quantities of feed can lead to obesity or starvation. Feed by weight and not by volume – ideally know your horse's weight using scales or a tape, but also know what weight of feed is in a scoop, bag, or bucket of feed.



**Balanced Diet:** The horse cube as supplied by reputable horse feed mills is pre-balanced and the feeding guidelines should be known and followed. It is important that a horse's diet is balanced not just in terms of the quantity of feed but also the quality of feed in terms of macronutrients (protein, fats, fibre, carbohydrates, and water) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). Feed by the science not by volume – feed quality should be horse-specific.



**Feeding Management:** Feed should be carefully sourced, delivered, and stored to preserve the quality. Feed little and often, "trickle feeding" to mimic nature and always have forage for the horse to nibble, resembling the grazing diet for which the horse was designed. Horses can graze for up to 20 hours a day. Sub-optimal feed management may have an impact on metabolic issues, e.g. gastric ulceration and behavioural issues such as crib-biting.

Your feed mill or feed merchant is happy to discuss these and other factors with you. A properly formulated feed from a reputable mill will have used the best scientific knowledge to formulate a balanced feed.







## Good Feeding

Criteria	Indicators	Description	Checklist
Water	Water buckets	Horses should have constant access to clean water	
	Skin elasticity	Daily skin elasticity tests are a good way to check horses for dehydration	
	Bucket test	A bucket test can be useful to check if your horse is thirsty, especially where automatic drinkers are used. Withdraw other access to water, place a full bucket of water in the stable and analyse your horse's drinking patterns	
	Clean water trough	Water troughs/drinkers/buckets should be checked daily for cleanliness	
	How wet is box?	Check box/stable daily for unusual urination patterns. A dry box may indicate that your horse is dehydrated	
	Water quality analysis	Routine water quality testing is good practice	
Tailored Diet	Weighing	Weigh your horse weekly using a weighing scale or body tape. Also weigh before and after each race	
	Weight records	Maintain a record of horses' weights as above	
	Body Conditioning Score (BCS)	Use a BCS to assess a horse's condition	
	Horse Performance	Measure and analyse your horse performance, e.g. heart rate, breathing rate, rider feedback, timings	
	Horse Behaviour	Check to see if your horse finishes each feed and observe their eating patterns	
Balanced Diet	Feed company advice	Reputable feed companies will offer feeding advice. Feeding guidelines are available on feed bags to ensure horses are provided a balanced diet	
	Feed quality testing	Where raw ingredients are sourced in bulk, it is advised that sample quality testing is performed to ensure that feed meets the nutritional requirements of your horse. It is also important to carry out routine bacterial and fungal tests	
Feeding	Feeding schedules	Horses daily feed routine should follow the guideline of little and often	
	Invoices	Maintain a record of feed invoices	
	Certified training for staff	Ensure staff have received suitable training in equine nutrition and feeding	
	Access to forage	Horses should have adequate access to forage to meet the horses' nutritional needs	







# Good Housing

Good housing refers to the entire built environment the horse experiences. This includes stables, barns, yards, exercise facilities, turn-out paddocks, fencing, transport, racecourse facilities, and veterinary hospitals/clinics. These all have potential long-term impacts on the welfare of the horse and good design at the outset ensures good outcomes. The industry has centuries of experience with equine facilities, which have evolved from trial and error. A horse's environment should be designed to meet their welfare requirements, minimise the risk of injury, and provide shade and shelter.



**Stable Design:** Horses may be housed as individuals or in groups. Where horses are housed in groups particularly with young stock ample space should be provided to ensure that all horses fare equally well. Horses housed in groups should be closely monitored and the group maintained to avoid a horse being bullied or not getting sufficient access to feed. All horses should have space to move freely, stand up, lie down, roll, and have a full range of head and neck movement. Stabling should allow for sufficient air ventilation to reduce/remove air pollutants such as Carbon Dioxide, ammonia, and dust, which can be damaging to a horse's respiratory system. Minimum stable size for a single horse should be 3.6m x 3.6m.

Horses are impacted positively by light, lighting impacts hormonal production; therefore, adequate lighting is essential for good welfare. Lighting should be sufficient to allow for inspection of horses. Darkness is also required to allow for adequate rest and as a trigger for hormone release.



**Dry Bedding:** Bedding and flooring should be appropriate to ensure adequate drainage of stables, should be level and

balanced, and should ensure comfort that allows horses to lie down, prevent abrasion and injury. Bedding should be of good quality, clean, dry, dust and pathogen free. Soiled bedding and stale or contaminated feed should be removed daily and disposed of appropriately.



**Exercise Surfaces:** All exercise surfaces should be consistent and allow for balanced exercise of horses; the surface should be suitable for the speed and workload as per the individual training plans for each horse. Any hazards must be removed and the risk of injury reduced. By maintaining a record of any significant injuries to horses during exercise this will allow for an injury database to be compiled improving insight into the causes that result in serious injury. The range of exercise facilities available should be appropriate to your training methods/objectives and the horses' needs.



**Stable Management:** Overall good stable management practice will improve the welfare of each horse. Maintaining an appropriate horse to staff ratio and an optimum occupancy rate will ensure consistent high standards of care are equally afforded to all horses in your yard. Having a good team structure in place including the healthcare team will promote good processes, routine and consistency that protects horses. It is important to have health and safety and emergency procedures in place so you know who to call in the event of a medical emergency, or what to do in the event of a yard emergency such as fire, flood, or disruption to supplies to ensure the safety of horses.





**Thermal Comfort:** Horses can acclimatise to a range of temperatures, however as a result of domestication and training regimes it is important to ensure that your horse is thermally comfortable in their environment. Rugging of horses may be necessary, rugs should be properly fitted and fit for purpose. Rugs should be removed routinely for visual inspection of a horse's body condition, health, rubbing, or injury caused by a rug.



**Individual Needs:** Each horse has individual needs; it is important to familiarise yourself with your horses' characteristics and adapt their housing requirements accordingly. Horses may benefit from a variety of environmental enrichments to reduce boredom, stress, or stereotypic behaviours.



**Social Contact & Interaction:** Horses are a herd animal so it is important that they can communicate with other horses by sight and sound. Environmental and social enrichment including turnout facilities should allow horses to interact freely with expressions of normal behaviours while also minimising the risk of injury.



**Transport:** Horses should only be transported if they are in a fit condition and by appropriately trained personnel. Long journeys should be well planned to allow for rest periods and the provision of food and water where necessary. Prolonged travel can be stressful for horses and can lead to respiratory problems. Vehicles for transporting horses should be safe, clean, well ventilated, regularly maintained, and disinfected. It is important to have isolation facilities available for sick horses or new horses coming into your yard for quarantining purposes to prevent any potential spread of disease.



## Good Housing

Criteria	Indicators	Description	Checklist
Stable design	Ventilation – air changes/hr	Stables should have sufficient air ventilation (e.g., absence of unpleasant odours, condensation, dust, etc.)	
	Bacteria & fungi testing	It is good practice to carry out routine environmental laboratory testing for harmful bacteria and fungi on your yard	
	Lesions on hip or hock	Daily checks for lesions and abrasions	
	Respiratory disease	Observe horses for any signs of respiratory disease, coughing, or abnormal breathing during rest or exercise	
	Stable dimensions & standards	Stables should allow horses to move freely and meet minimum stable dimensions	
	Lighting	Bright enough to mimic daylight for long periods every day	



## Good Housing *continued*

Criteria	Indicators	Description	Checklist
Dry bedding	Ammonia/air quality	Check the quality of air in stables – dust, ammonia odours, other unpleasant odours that may be harmful to horses	
	Hoof conditions linked to soiled bedding	Poor hoof condition may be an indication of unhygienic bedding, e.g. thrush	
Exercise surfaces	Injury	It is recommended that any significant injuries sustained by horses in your care should be recorded to analyse any potential trends over a prolonged period	
	Lameness	Horses should be assessed daily prior to exercise for any lameness and if lame a record should be maintained	
	Maintenance (Gallops/walker)	It is important to maintain the condition of all exercise facilities used by horses	
	Surface substrate (evenness & integrity)	Surfaces should be managed to allow for the balanced exercise of horses	
	Racecourse track management	Clerk of the course independently passes track suitable for racing	
Stable	Records keeping (Occupancy rate/staff to horse ratio)	Horse care requires time. Each task such as observing, feeding, grooming, exercising, turn-out, handling, catching and bringing in etc. It is important to ensure there is a sufficient staff to horse ratio and be realistic about the time required. Recording this will allow for measurement of an optimum occupancy rate for your operation	
Thermal Comfort	Use of rugs during inclement weather	Rugs may be needed by your horse to ensure its thermal comfort. Horses should be checked regularly to ensure they are not too hot or cold. Rugs should be removed routinely for observation of the horse's condition	
Individual needs	Housing horses in accordance with their personalities	Each horse is an individual and may require varying stabling or companion needs	
Social Contact & Interaction	Turnout pens	Where possible horses should be turned out often in a safe and secure paddock or pen	
	Paddocks	Ensure there is a pasture management regime in place and paddocks are safe	
	Companion boxes	Where possible companion boxes should be provided to enable greater horse to horse contact	
Transport	Vehicle Design	Vehicles should be designed for transport of horses (incl. mares and foals) and regularly maintained	
	Trained Staff	Staff should have appropriate qualifications and training for transporting horses	
	Journey plan & record	Long journeys should be well planned to allow for any necessary rest stops. Journey times and details should be recorded	
	Isolation Facilities	Isolation facilities should be available for new horses coming into your yard and for any sick horses to prevent the spread of any potential disease	







# Good Health

Equine welfare is synonymous with good health. Prevention of pain, injury, and disease are the goal and where prevention is not possible, rapid treatment should be achieved.



**Healthcare Team:** To ensure a high equine welfare status requires team effort. Many yards may use a variety of Vets and healthcare practitioners depending on their areas of expertise; however, it is recommended that a yard have a primary Vet who is central to the overall care provided to horses. It is important that the yard's primary Vet has a robust relationship with the staff, farriers, dentists, physios, and other healthcare professionals used. Legally, any diagnosis or treatment of any animal must only be done under the supervision of a Vet.



**Signs of Health:** There is constant intuitive appraisal of the horse's health. Questions like "did she eat up?" or "was the bedding disturbed?" or "did you hear any coughs?" are frontline healthcare questions. The best practice is to capture, record and share these nuggets of information within the team so that everyone can respond effectively.

The compilation of health records should allow for systems to improve in response to a pattern of suboptimal outcomes. Write it down and learn from what goes well and what does not.



**Performance:** Under-performance may be an indicator of ill-health and receives much attention in the life of the potential racehorse.



**Tack:** All tack used on horses should be well-fitted and appropriate to improve the horse's well-being during exercise. The use of well-designed tack improves the experience for all horses.



**Biosecurity:** Refers to actions taken to prevent the spread of disease. This includes within the existing yard population and new

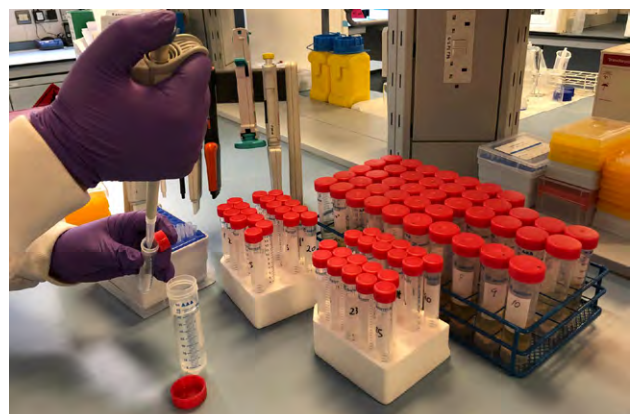
threats from outside. Horse vaccinations should be up to date and procedures in place within the yard to prevent the spread of disease/viral infections amongst horses. Daily tasks such as mucking out, painting, and disinfection of barns are all healthcare improvements.



**Staff Training:** The most important people in the care of a horse are those that look after the horses daily- these are the frontline of the healthcare team. Stable staff are the first people to assess the horse each morning. It is vital that those working with horses understand and accept responsibility for the welfare of horses in their care. Every person responsible for the supervision of horses needs to be able to recognise early signs of distress or ill health and have knowledge of basic first aid. They should also have access to a Vet. Staff should be provided with adequate training and the sharing of knowledge and communication within a team is crucial. Continuous development and training should be encouraged amongst all staff.



**Breeding:** Thoroughbred breeding requires all the care and daily routines outlined here but with significant differences in lifestyle. Breeding animals tend to live outdoors more often. The principles of Good Feeding, Good Housing, Good Health, and Good Well-being apply equally to breeding animals; however, this document focusses more on the racing population.







## Good Health

Criteria	Indicators	Description	Checklist
Healthcare Team	Vet records of blood/lung scope tests	It is good practice to carry out regular blood/lung scope tests on your horses and maintain records	
	Trot ups	Horses should be trotted up daily to assess for lameness	
	Baseline data	A record of baseline data can be helpful to assess any changes, e.g., resting heartrate, normal temperature, blood parameters, larynx function	
	Vaccinations	All vaccinations should be up to date and recorded	
	Medicine Usage	Administration of medicines should only be carried out under the supervision of a Vet. The medicine register must be up to date at all times and prescriptions should be kept	
	Farrier Standards	Only qualified farrier services should be used	
Signs of Health	Faecal quality/quantity	Daily assessment of droppings, performed whilst mucking out	
	Worm counts	Laboratory worm counts are recommended as part of quality worming programme	
	Clean nose	Daily visual checks on horses' noses for any signs of respiratory infection, normally at first check in the morning, before and after exercise	
	Daily temperature	Horses' temperatures should be checked daily before exercising and recorded	
	Coat, feet, and eyes	Daily checks should be carried out on horses' coats, feet, and eyes for any signs of ill health	
	Weight/BCS	Horses' BCS/Weights should be recorded weekly to assess any changes, and before and after any significant events. e.g. race	
	Changes in behaviour	Any changes in a horse's behaviour should be recorded and analysed	
	Change in temperature	Any notable change in temperature should reported to your Vet	



## Good Health *continued*

Criteria	Indicators	Description	Checklist
Performance	Track/training health events	Track & training performance can be used to indicate good health	
	Lack of muscle development	As a horse's training progresses muscle development or muscle wastage should be observed . Any lack of expected muscle development should be investigated	
	Change in performance	Any notable change in performance can indicate an improvement/decline in a horse's health and should be evaluated	
	No. of inactive days	The number of inactive days for a horse should be recorded and any reasons for prolonged inactivity	
	Career longevity	The career longevity of horses can be an indication of good health. Maintaining a record of this will allow for trend analysis	
Tack	Tack and rug marks	Tack and rug should be fitted correctly and not leave marks on the horse	
	Saddle Fit	It is important to ensure your saddle is appropriately fitted to your horse	
Biosecurity	Ringworm	Procedures should be in place to prevent the spread of ringworm in your yard	
	Viral Spread	Procedures should be in place to prevent viral spread in your yard	
Staff Training	Feedback from rider	Rider/stable staff feedback is vital to the health of horses in your yard and it is important that this is encouraged and training (formal or informal) if required is provided	
	Skills	Upskilling your staff through formal (accredited by an external provider) & informal (on-the-job or peer-to-peer) training	
	Attitude and empathy	A good attitude and empathy should always be shown to horses	
Breeding	Fertility	Fertility assessment can be carried out on breeding stock. Fertility can be affected by poor health and diet or infections	
	Conception Rates	Maintaining a record of conception rates for all breeding stock will allow for trend analysis	
	Birth weights	Birth weights should be within normal parameters	
	Milk quality	IgG test can be carried out to test the quality of a mare's milk	
	Runners: Foals Ratio Winners: Runners Ratio	Recording of these ratios can be indicative of the health and performance of breeding stock	







# Good Well-being

The principles of Good Feeding, Good Housing, Good Health are all well-accepted and understood in the context of Irish thoroughbred horses. Good Well-being focuses on the human-horse relationship and having a good understanding of horse behaviours and personality to support this relationship.

The individual characteristics or personalities of horses are easily recognised by those spending time with them. Some horses are aggressive, others timid; some are greedy, others finicky; some are nervous, others placid. This understanding is the first step towards creating a lifestyle that maximises the well-being of each horse.



**Daily Routine:** Horses are creatures of habit and thrive best on a daily routine. Divergence from routine can cause stress, yet they are adaptable as we see with for example the loading onto a horse walker – stage 1 reluctant, stage 2 suspicious, stage 3 accepting and stage 4 enjoyment.



**Exercise Regime:** Exercise programmes are designed with a purpose in mind – sales or racing, for example. They are tailored according to the horse's needs and capabilities. A horse should have a routine programme with a diverse range of exercises, as with all athletes downtime is just as important.



**Horse-Human Interaction:** Horses need a constant and coherent set of signals for which they quickly develop an understanding. Mixed messages are a major source of stress to horses and should be avoided.



**Horse Behaviour:** We impose a regime on our horses that may at times seem unnatural, but when counterbalanced with natural behaviours can maintain a high well-being score for each horse. Take care to allow social contact horse-to-horse, allow some freedoms within safety limits, and don't forget that horses are herd animals that enjoy time with other horses.



## Good Well-being

Criteria	Indicators	Description	Checklist
Daily Routine	Low stress handling	It is important that there is a daily routine and consistency in your yard	
Exercise Regime	Individual horse performance	Each horse should have an individual training regime that is monitored	
	Changes in yard performance (KPIs)	Yard KPIs can be helpful to analyse performance and evaluate what is working well and what may not be working	
Human-Horse Interaction	Matching horse with rider	Stable staff and riders spend a lot of time with the horses daily and it is important to match according to traits and capabilities.	
	Yard atmosphere/ethos (noise, whinnying, neighing)	Important to have a positive environment in the yard. Happy people should mean happy horses	
	Positive interactions	Consistent messaging, confident horses	
	Staff training	Staff should receive appropriate training	
Horse Behaviour	Changes in behaviour and mood (knowing your horse and what is normal)	Daily interactions with your horse will mean you know their reactions best. Any deviations from normal behaviours, mood or characteristics should be examined	
	Looking out the stable door	Are horses alert and looking out over the stable door? Horses are inquisitive animals and observant of their surroundings	
	Lack of behavioural stress	Horses find security in familiar settings and routine. Any sudden changes should be avoided to reduce stress	
	Access to forage	Horses enjoy nibbling and grazing on forage therefore continual access is desirable	
	Social Contact	Horses are herd animals and social contact is important to their psychological & emotional health	









# Alternative Career Options for Thoroughbreds

Thoroughbreds are known for their ability to adapt, transition and succeed in a range of different disciplines some of which are listed below:

- ◆ Breeding (ITM, ITBA)
- ◆ Companion animals
- ◆ Dressage (HSI, Dressage Ireland)
- ◆ Equine Assisted Therapy (Horses for People)
- ◆ Eventing (Eventing Ireland)
- ◆ Polo (Polo Ireland)
- ◆ Polocrosse (Polocrosse Ireland)
- ◆ Showjumping (HSI, SJI)
- ◆ Showing (In hand, ridden, working hunter, side saddle)
- ◆ TREC (HSI)
- ◆ Pleasure & Trail riding

## Treo Eile

Established in 2020, Treo Eile is a not-for-profit providing assistance to racehorse trainers and owners who wish to rehome and retrain horses once their racetrack careers are complete. Treo Eile has three main aims:

- ◆ Connect owners and trainers with retrainers/new homes
- ◆ Promote the thoroughbred in a second career
- ◆ Support the thoroughbred in its second career through education and a series of sponsored competition opportunities

[www.treoile.com](http://www.treoile.com)

## Irish Horse Welfare Trust (IHWT)

IHWT seeks to re-home and re-train thoroughbreds no longer active in racing. The IHWT was established to provide a dedicated centre that is equipped for dealing with the rehabilitation and re-homing of equines and has become a specialist rehabilitation centre for thoroughbred type horses.

[www.ihwt.ie](http://www.ihwt.ie)



## Racehorse to Riding Horse Ireland

Racehorse to Riding Horse provides racehorses with a new focus when they come off the track. The organisation, set up by Julie Morris, rehabilitates ex-racehorses, helping each to adapt to life outside their previous training and to perform in other equestrian activities. (Follow on Facebook)

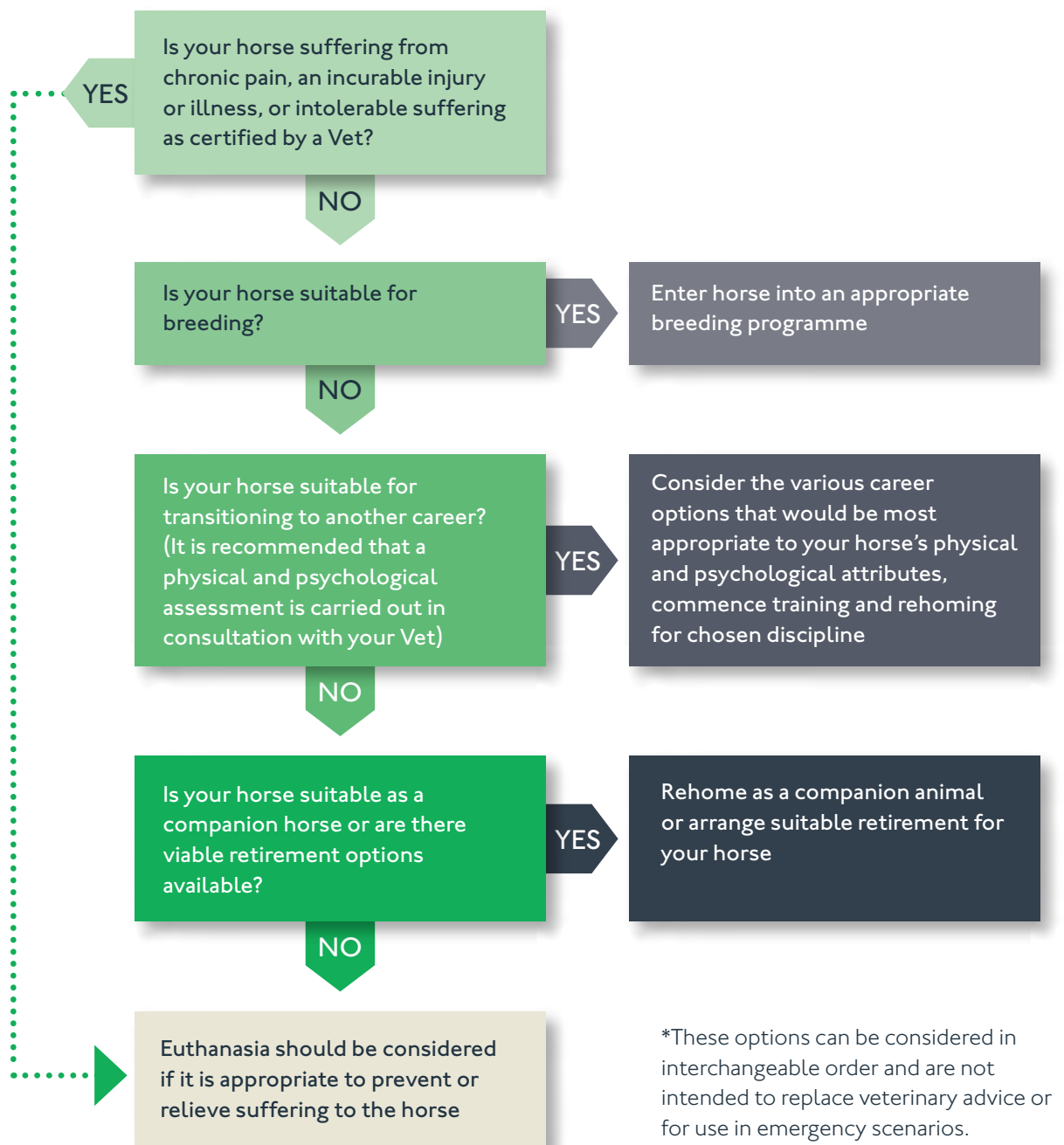
## The British and Irish Thoroughbred Agency

This agency is an independent and successful retraining and rehoming business of ex-racehorses, with many members, followers and trainers that are a part of their programme.

[www.irishthoroughbredagency.org](http://www.irishthoroughbredagency.org)



# Options to Consider When a Horse's Racing Career Ends



# End of Life

When we bring horses into the world, we do so with the implied commitment to ensure they enjoy the highest standard of care throughout their lives. Horses that have reached the end of their racing career, are physically well and have a tractable temperament can transition to another career or retire. Horses with minor ailments or with challenging temperaments may be rehabilitated and retrained with time and care.

## Euthanasia

We make every effort to keep our horses well and treat them promptly when they are unwell. We commit to preventing further suffering through the judicious use of euthanasia.

The decision to euthanise a horse is based on an assessment, under veterinary guidance, of the horse now and an honest appraisal of its future circumstances.

Horses with certain injuries or medical conditions that are unlikely to be cured must be prevented from enduring intolerable suffering. For these the decision to euthanise may be the most ethically acceptable option.

Euthanasia can be a difficult decision for a horse owner. It should only be considered when it is in the best interest of the horse's welfare, to prevent or relieve any further suffering to the horse. It is important to remember that prolonging a horse's life does not always equate to a better life. It is widely accepted globally that delayed euthanasia is a worse outcome for the horse in situations where matters are likely to deteriorate, so sound judgement is required.

All equine Vets have the capability to perform this act humanely and with sensitivity.

## Abattoir

In the E.U. horses are still classified as food-producing animals, with horsemeat commonplace in many E.U. countries. There is one horse abattoir active in Ireland, at Straffan. Horses that have never received certain medicines and therefore are not "signed out" of the food chain (for reasons of human health protection) may be sent to this facility which is licensed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.





# Emergency Contacts

If you suspect or are aware of the mistreatment of or potential welfare issues relating to any equines, we encourage you to contact an Authorised Officer from the list below. Authorised Officers are permitted in accordance with the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013 to enter a premises and take legal control of animals if necessary. It is important to contact the relevant authorities. Moving an equine that has been subject to cruelty or mistreatment may cause additional and unnecessary stress to the horse, so it is important to use trained professionals and ensure correct protocols are followed.

## **IHRB (Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board):**

Confidential Hotline:

**Freephone:** 1 800 855 846 (Rep. of Ireland) or

**Freephone:** 0800 0015 114 (N. Ireland or GB)

## **Dept. of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Animal Welfare Helpline:**

The Department has Authorised Officers/Veterinary Inspectors in each county in Ireland who are responsible for dealing with welfare inspections for farm animals and horses. Their Animal Welfare Helpline is confidential.

**Phone:** 01 6072 379

**Email:** [animalwelfare@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:animalwelfare@agriculture.gov.ie)

## **ISPCA National Animal Cruelty Helpline:**

**Callsave:** 0818 515 515

**Email:** [helpline@ispca.ie](mailto:helpline@ispca.ie)

## **DSPCA:**

**Email:** [cruelty@dspca.ie](mailto:cruelty@dspca.ie)

**Phone:** 01 499 4700

## **An Garda Síochána:**

Every Member of An Garda Síochána is an Authorised Officer under the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013. Contact your local Garda stations or in an emergency dial 112 or 999

[www.garda.ie/Stations/Default.aspx](http://www.garda.ie/Stations/Default.aspx)

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## Additional Resources

### **The Veterinary Council of Ireland**

There are more than 300 specialist equine veterinary surgeons in practice across the country. A full list can be found at:

[www.vci.ie](http://www.vci.ie)

### **Industry Assistance Programme:**

**Freephone:** 1800 313 661

(Offering Free and Confidential Support to people working in the racing industry)

## Useful Links

- ◆ **Animal Health and Welfare Act:**  
[www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2013/act/15/enacted/en/html](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2013/act/15/enacted/en/html).
- ◆ **Blue Cross:**  
[www.bluecross.ie](http://www.bluecross.ie)
- ◆ **Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council  
- Early Warning System:**  
[www.fawac.ie](http://www.fawac.ie)
- ◆ **HRI Equip:**  
[www.equip.ie](http://www.equip.ie)
- ◆ **International Federation of  
Horseracing Authority:**  
[www.ifhaonline.org](http://www.ifhaonline.org)
- ◆ **Irish Equine Centre:**  
[www.irishequinecentre.ie](http://www.irishequinecentre.ie)
- ◆ **Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board:**  
[www.ihrb.ie/9-horses-veterinary](http://www.ihrb.ie/9-horses-veterinary)
- ◆ **Irish Master Farriers Association:**  
[www.irishmasterfarriers.com](http://www.irishmasterfarriers.com)
- ◆ **Irish Thoroughbred Breeders  
Association:**  
[www.itba.ie](http://www.itba.ie)
- ◆ **Weatherbys Ireland GSB Ltd:**  
[www.weatherbys.co.uk](http://www.weatherbys.co.uk)
- ◆ **World Horse Welfare:**  
[www.worldhorsewelfare.org](http://www.worldhorsewelfare.org)

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# HORSE RACING IRELAND

Ballymany, The Curragh, Co. Kildare. R56 XE37

T: 045 455 455 | E: [info@hri.ie](mailto:info@hri.ie) | W: [www.hri.ie](http://www.hri.ie)