

Reproductive Management



“Purpose-bred” these days describes a horse bred to excel within a specific industry. It is just as important today as when livelihoods depended on breeding selection with heavy horses to plow and pull heavy wagons, fast horses to carry messengers, pit ponies to work in the mines and the list goes on. The future of a foal relies on diligent research performed by the breeder not only that there will be a market for the animal but also background checks for good genetics to produce the healthy, quality offspring capable of the intended purpose.

The Code of Practice provides clear requirements for the initial veterinary assessments for soundness for breeding. Care during gestation and foaling right up to the time of weaning are also covered. The code includes common signs of abnormalities to watch out for in a newborn and underlines the importance of colostrum. The code states newborn foals must be monitored to ensure they can rise and suck unassisted. Appropriate care must be provided without delay if abnormalities in the foal are observed.

Considerable time and money are tied into every horse breeding endeavor and decisions based on emotion can prove unrealistic, resulting in unwanted horses entering a saturated market. For this reason breeding should only commence if, and only if, a known market or purpose for the foal exists. There should also be a plan in place in the event you are unable to sell the foal or no longer able to care for it. Experienced breeders will verify one of the most important considerations is ensuring financial means to see the horse through to a purposeful life. Equine Guelph’s article, [Responsible, Purposeful Breeding](#) takes a look at costs and the many considerations including initial selection of breeding stock, special healthcare and nutritional requirements, facilities and planning.

Learn more about the Equine Code of Practice – visit – [Reproductive Management](#)

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

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

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

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

