



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Horse Code of Practice to be Updated

(Ottawa, ON) 13 December 2010 - Equine Canada is pleased to announce the Equine Code Development Committee has been finalized and the revision process for the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Horses can begin. The revisions will be guided by the National Farm Animal Care Council's (NFACC) Code development process.

"Participants on the Equine Code Development Committee represent a broad cross-section of equine stakeholders," explains Jackie Wepruk, General Manager of NFACC. "Participants represent the diversity of the equine industry, encompassing the many purposes and uses of horses in Canada." Visit www.equinecanada.ca for more details on members of the Equine Code Development Committee.

Since 2005, Equine Canada has led the effort to update the Code of Practice for Horses and facilitated the organization of the Equine Code Development Committee. An updated version of the Code, originally developed in 1998, is expected to be released in 2013.

"Given the dramatic increase in the number of horses in Canada at the recreational, sport and agricultural levels, as well as the technical and health advances since 1998, the Industry Division of Equine Canada deemed the revision of the Code to be a high priority," stated Dean Leifso, Chair, Equine Canada Industry Division Council. "It is gratifying that the Government of Canada and NFACC recognized the need for a revised equine Code of Practice and have provided support to develop a new Code for Canada's equine community."

"Equine Canada advocates the humane treatment of all horses, donkeys and mules, and believes that the equine industry and owners have a responsibility to provide humane care," stated Dr. Mary Bell, Co-Chair, Equine Canada Health and Welfare Committee. "The updated Code of Practice for Horses will provide guidelines to assist in improving an animal's quality of life from birth through death."

Caroline Ramsay has been contracted by NFACC as the Equine Code Development Secretary and will facilitate the work of the Equine Code Development Committee. Caroline has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of British Columbia. She is an articling agrologist and her work experience includes drafting standards and serving as a liaison for a farm animal welfare certification program.

The Codes of Practice are nationally developed guidelines for the care and handling of the different species of farm animals. They are intended to promote sound management and welfare practices through recommendations and requirements for housing, management, transportation, processing and other animal husbandry practices.

Requirements refer to either a regulatory requirement, or an industry-imposed expectation of best practices to encourage a higher level of care. A key feature of the Code process is the inclusion of a Scientists' Committee, comprised of knowledgeable equine researchers. The Scientists' Committee reviews the research relative to key priority welfare issues and compiles a summary report for the Equine Code Development Committee.

About NFACC

NFACC is a collaborative partnership of diverse stakeholders created in 2005 to share information and work together on farm animal care and welfare. It is the national lead for farm animal care issues in Canada. NFACC would like to acknowledge the Canadian Animal Health Coalition (CAHC) for their role in securing funding for this project. For more information about NFACC, visit www.nfacc.ca.

About Equine Canada

Equine Canada is Canada's national governing body for equestrianism. A member-driven, charitable institution, it is the executive branch of the Canadian Equestrian Team, and the national authority for equestrian competition; the national voice for recreational riders; and the national association for equine welfare, breeding, and industry. Equine Canada is recognized by the Government of Canada, the International Equestrian Federation (FEI), and the Canadian Olympic Committee as the national organization representing equestrian sport and equine interests. For more information about Equine Canada, please visit www.equinecanada.ca.

Code of Practice updates initiated from 2010 to 2013 are part of the project: Addressing Domestic and International Market Expectations Relative to Farm Animal Welfare. Funding for this project is being made available through the AgriFlexibility, a program delivered in Canada's Economic Action Plan (EAP). The EAP focuses on strengthening the economy and securing Canada's economic future. For more information on AgriFlexibility and Canada's Economic Action Plan, please visit www.agr.gc.ca/agriflexibility and www.actionplan.gc.ca.

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