

KONINKLIJKE FRIESCH PAARDEN-STAMBOEK PRESENTS:

The Friesian horse

www.friesianhorse.ir

مجموعه اسب فریزی ایران
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A PRIVILEGE

Being the owner of a Friesian horse is a privilege. Something I am fully aware of every day when I visit our mare Winke – now 23 years old – in her stable or field. She whinnies happily to welcome me and quietly and full of confidence waits for what is in store. Her dam lived to be 28 so hopefully we can enjoy her for years to come.

The Friesian horse is proud, strong and intelligent. In the olden days the Friesian horse was a farm horse that went through difficult times when mechanisation hit the agricultural sector. Thanks to her excellent character, her resilience and versatility she bounced back. And with a vengeance, she won over the hearts of horse lovers the world over, not just in Friesland but across the Netherlands and in more than eighty countries across the world. The Friesian horse is used for breeding, she leaves its mark as a recreational horse and knows how to impress at ever higher levels in dressage-, driving- and showdriving sports.

That is why the mission of the KFPS is to preserve, improve, promote and advance the wellbeing of the Friesian breed with its characteristic exterior, paces and personality. A mission that pays attention to all aspects related to this wonderful horse and which deserves the best-possible care. With this book we aim to do just that and make our contribution by sharing knowledge, information and providing inspiration so that you, just like us, can keep on enjoying your fantastic black pearls for a very long time.

Wiebe Wieling
Chairman KFPS
www.friesianhorse.ir



PHOTO: JOHANNA FABER

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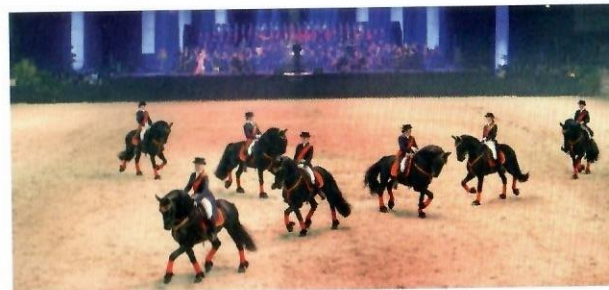
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PHOTO: CHRISTIANE SLAWIK


KFPS • ROYAL FRIESIAN
KONINKLIJKE FRIESCH PAARDEN-STAMBOEK

The story of the *Friesian horse*

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A tale about loyalty, pride and survival

The popular Friesian horse is probably the most evocative and inspiring horse breed in the world. These black pearls with their proud and stately appearance have spread their wings across the entire world. From China to Canada and from Sweden to South Africa. They are symbols of power and elegance and with their lively and friendly personality steal the hearts of so many. They shine in famous Hollywood movies, in shows and now too in the theatre spectacle *The Storm Rider*. Thanks to this immense popularity the Friesian horse has blossomed into a significant Dutch export product, also nicknamed 'The Black Gold'. More than 70,000 Friesian horses have found homes in more than 80 countries all over the world. That popularity has not always been something that could be taken for granted, as the next tale about the Friesian horse teaches us.

Domestication of the horse

The turbulent history of the Friesian horse begins some fifty million years ago, coinciding with the history of all horses: the age of the Eocene. That was the time when the prehistoric equine *Eohippus* came into being, roughly the size of Alsatian dogs, living in the forests of North America. Since the wild horse was domestica-

ted about 6000 years ago, human activities have channelled its development towards utility animal with multiple uses, both in-harness and under saddle. In the early days of our era the Friesian breed as we know it did not exist, but the Friesian horse originating from Friesland was widespread. In those days Friesland stretched along the banks of the Friesian Sea, later to be called the North Sea, from Het Swin near Belgium to the Weser River near Bremen in Germany. An area continually under change from the sea, and used as the setting for *The Storm Rider*.

Robust steed of knights

The first written reports of Friesian horses date back to the beginning of our era. Some evidence has been unearthed that in the days of Emperor Nero the illustrious Roman army included Friesian riders. It is known that Friesian horses were used in the famous Battle of Hastings, which was won in 1066 by William the Conqueror, seated on a Friesian horse. Fact is that in the 13th century Friesians were already known as breeders and traders who sold cattle and horses at markets throughout Western Europe. The robust horses they bred were rich in feathers and no taller than 1.40m. These horses could carry the weight of armoured riders weighing up to 250kg and hence were highly desirable as mounts for knights in the Middle Ages.

Aristocratic, light-rooted and graceful

In the period referred to as the Baroque Period (1600-1750), there is a shift in the image of the ideal horse in Europe. Moorish and Turkish armies had horses that were nimble as well as fast, no match for the heavily-built (Friesian) horses used by knights. At that time, Europe was under Spanish Rule and the Dutch nobility under the leadership of William of Orange was engaged in the Eighty Years' War with the oppressor. Spanish domination meant the arrival of the Spanish Cavalry with their aristocratic, mainly Andalusian horses. This lightly-built and agile horse carried a lot of Arabian blood and was not only suited to the changing manner of warfare, but with its stately appearance and elevated paces also proved to be a magnificent show horse. A horse, fit for aristocrats and high-placed officers. The Andalusian horses with their variations in coat colour left their mark on the Friesian breed, which became more aristocratic and light-footed, developed a smaller head and an elegant, lightly arched neck. At this stage this Baroque, Friesian horse showed many similarities with our present-day horse.

The Golden Age of the Friesian horse

The fame of the Baroque, versatile Friesian horse as a battle steed, dressage horse, carriage horse and trotter rose to great heights in Europe. The Golden Age of the Netherlands (17th century) also became the Golden Age of the Friesian horse. The breed was for instance, terribly popular with military officers from the nobility classes and equitation schools at the European courts where the high equitation of dressage was in vogue. Many art objects from the Golden Age bear testimony to the great fame of the Friesian horse, such as an engraving of the Friesian battle steed Phryso in possession of the Spanish army commander Don Juan from Austria. Rarely however, does popularity last for all eternity and now was no different. Deployment of foot soldiers and fireweapons diminished the role of

the cavalry and new uses for the Friesian horse had to be found. Friesians were now used as trotters and carriage horses but also for light agricultural work.

Dancing show horses unsuitable for farm work

The Friesian breed quickly created a name for itself as carriage horses and trotters. In Friesland the trotting races evolved to proper village feasts where great amounts of money changed hands. Due to the Industrial Revolution (19th century) agriculture and industry grew expansively. In its wake the population developed feelings of patriotism and community pride and elegant carriage horses like the Friesian horse came into fashion. The nobility as well as the farming classes liked to go to Sunday service with a 'sjees' pulled by a fine-looking Friesian as a token of their wealth and pride. Yet, this lighter type of Friesian again faced a period when it was gradually elbowed out in the north of the Netherlands, this time by more heavily-built horse breeds and the introduction of the automobile. The dancing 'show horse' of the farming classes turned out to be unsuitable for the increasingly heavy work on the farm and the self-driving vehicle, evolved from carriages, exerted a growing appeal on those who could afford such an automobile.

Friesian Horse Studbook founded in 1879

In order to protect the Friesian breed a group of Friesian landowners and farmers founded the (Friesch) Paarden-Stamboek (Friesian Horse Studbook) in the tavern 'De drie Romers' in Roordahuizum (Reduzum), in 1879. This was the first Dutch horse studbook and the only indigenous horse breed in the Netherlands. Great contributing factor was that the Friesian horse, just like the Friesian cattle, had become a symbol of Friesian pride and identity, which needed preserving. From this time onwards the Friesian horse breed is a fact. The Studbook decided to keep two books: Book A for the 'Friesian breed' and Book B for 'crossbreeds'.



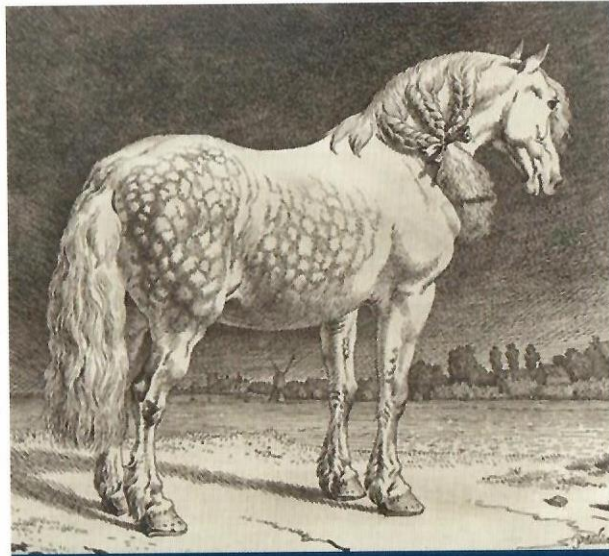


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*Many art objects
from the Golden Age
bear testimony
to the great fame of the
Friesian horse*

Still, this was not enough to ward off the imminent downfall of the Friesian horse. When at the end of the 19th century cheaper agricultural products were imported from North America, the farming sector in



JETBLACK PEARLS

Coat colour of Friesians has not always been confined to just black. Crossbreeding with Andalusians with their range of different coat colours has also influenced the colour of the Friesian breed, as shown in a Paulus Potter engraving depicting a dappled grey Friesian. Whims of fashion and a growing preference for same-coloured horses in armies also played a part. There were prejudices too. The general belief was that white horses were weak and therefore no use as working horses. Most Friesians were either black- or bay-coloured, but people increasingly favoured black. In 1918 the Studbook ruled that strictly only horses with pure black coats would be accepted. The only concession made was a small white marking above the eyeline.

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Friesland was heavily hit by an agricultural crisis. Many farmers and members from the well-to-do classes left the province, but this happened to be the upper class who were known for breeding these luxury horses. Interestingly though, the Friesian horse continued to prove its worth pulling funeral carriages in England, which is why at the turn of the century, many young Friesian stud stallions disappeared overseas.

From elegant show horse to heavy farm horse

In 1913 the population of Friesian horses had dropped to a historical low with just three living, purebred Friesian stud stallions: Prins 109P, Alva 113P and Friso 117P. To ward off extinction something needed to be done. So a group of enthusiasts came together in the Oranje Hotel in Leeuwarden to found the society 'Het Friesche Paard'. In 1914 this society managed to convince the Studbook to reinstate the separation between Book A and Book B, which had been abolished eight years earlier. The Studbook finally decided to focus on breeding lightweight and middleweight farm horses and to ban crossbreeding with other breeds. The change had to be effected from within the breed. Two years later and for the first time in ten years, a Friesian stallion was registered in the Studbook: Oom 119. To meet the demand of farming, breeding of Friesians focused on a heavier and more compact build whilst at the same time preserving the black coat colour, rich feathers and good-natured personality. When millions of horses perished in the First World War (1914-1918) the demand for Friesians horses in agriculture went up strongly. It was the start of a new hey-day which was to last some thirty years.

A new crisis in the making

In 1954, 75 years after its foundation, the Studbook earned Royal status and transformed to the Koninklijke Vereniging 'Het Friesch Paarden-Stamboek' (the Royal Society the Friesian Horse Studbook), the KFPS. It was a



short-lived happiness because once again, innovations in agriculture posed yet another threat. After years of food shortages during 1940-1945 war times food production had to go up, which caused mechanisation in farming to soar. In no more than two decades the number of tractors increased tenfold making (Friesian) horses redundant. In 1970 the Studbook counted a mere 645 members, one thousand registered horses and barely four hundred mares were put in foal. Not a good situation to be in for a Studbook that already had a high kinship between horses because of its narrow base at the start of the century. Sales prices for Friesians dropped to slaughter value and the Studbook teetered on the brink of bankruptcy. Just like sixty years before, action was needed and again a group of Friesian horse lovers from Friesland stepped in to salvage the breed.

*In the wake
of this success
the KFPS progressed
to a very professional
Studbook*

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PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK

Saved by growing wealth and leisure time

In addition to membership recruitment and raffles, a crusade across Friesland was organised in 1967 to alert the population to the precarious position of the breed and to promote the Friesian as a sport- and recreational horse. It was a plea to stop breeding the Friesian horse for agriculture, but instead to breed a classy horse. A horse that would be fit for sport and recreation, in front of the carriage and under saddle. This time for a wider public than the aristocracy and wealthy classes of centuries ago. Luckily, prosperity and leisure time rose which made horseriding and equestrian sports accessible for more people. A strong boost was brought about by the new and popular equestrian discipline of four-in-hand driving, which won Friesian four-in-hand teams international acclaim. Their performances

triggered a growing demand for Friesian horses reaching far beyond the borders of Friesland. The many Hollywood films featuring the black pearls had a similar effect, such as *The Mask of Zorro* and more recently the popular series *The Hunger Games* and *Game of Thrones*. Breeding picked up and after twenty years the KFPS bounced back from a deep recession. The Centenary was celebrated in 1979, heralding the start of an unprecedented booming period.

Modern riding- and harness horse

The KFPS faced a series of challenges. Many studbooks used thoroughbreds to enhance their own breed and produce more lightweight animals. Being a closed studbook allowing only the use of purebreds, this was not an option for breeding Friesians. Therefore the

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SPECIAL TIES BETWEEN THE HOUSE OF ORANGE AND THE FRIESIAN HORSE

This special bond of the Royal House of Orange with the Friesian horse harks back to King William I, who ascended the throne in 1815. He was an accomplished rider and great fan of the Friesian breed. In 1839 the City of Leeuwarden gifted him with six 'coalblack' Friesian mares. Friesian horses could also be found in the royal stables of Kings William II and William III. Queen Wilhelmina, who was an excellent coachwoman herself, continued that tradition and when the Friesian Horse Studbook acquired Royal status in 1954 her daughter Juliana became patroness of the Studbook. In turn, former Queen Beatrix took over that role from her mother. Every other year since 1989 eight Friesian horses pull the Golden Coach on the Day of the King's Speech.





development to a modern riding- and carriage horse took considerably longer, but gradually the Friesian horse regained its former elegance and evolved to a more highlegged breed with a less heavy, compact build. Meanwhile, the surging demand from outside the borders of Friesland could hardly be met. The introduction of artificial insemination in the 70s opened up possibilities to inseminate mares in faraway places and enabled the population of Friesian horses to grow explosively from just under 3,000 in 1980 to 70,000 a quarter of a century later. In the wake of this success the KFPS progressed to a very professional Studbook which organises dozens of inspections each year to monitor if the Friesian horse continues to develop properly as a riding- and carriage horse. Never forget- www.friesianhorse.ir

ting to keep the focus on preserving those special breed characteristics that connects the Friesian horse with its ancient ancestors.

The Friesian horse conquers the world

Friesland's flagship with its hardworking mentality and uncomplicated personality has blossomed into one of the most sought-after and multifunctional breeds in the world. In the year 2018 The Royal Society of the Friesian Horse Studbook numbers over eleven thousand members in over one hundred countries. Each year around five thousand mares are 'covered' by just under one hundred stallions. With their former uses in trotting races and carriage driving the Friesian horse now proves itself in the in-harness sports. The talent

for dressage sports had already come to light at the European courts centuries ago. Nowadays the Friesian horse measures up against other breeds at the highest levels of dressage sports. Because of its impressive appearance and intelligent as well as good-natured character, Friesians are very popular too as show horses and movie stars. The international shows of the Fryske Quadrille and the Friesian Top Dressage Team are audience favourites and the theatre spectacle The Storm Rider (Stormruiter) with nearly one hundred Friesian horses taking centre stage, drew a stunning one hundred thousand visitors to Leeuwarden.

Inner and outer beauty

The chequered history of the Friesian horse and its strong ties with Friesland teach us that this versatile

breed again and again managed to adapt to whatever it was mankind expected from it. Be it warfare, prancing under saddle or in front of the carriage, trotting races, labouring away in farming or being used for riding- and driving sports, show and recreation, the Friesian horse always knew how to bounce back. Thanks to its proud appearance, jetblack colour, abundant feathers, noble head, the upright and lightly arched neck, the elegant build and elevated paces, the Friesian horse is a feast for the eyes. The intelligence and diligent attitude combined with their easy-going, good-natured personality make them such loyal companions for sport and recreation. That inner and outer beauty, we learn from the past, spells a very bright future for the Friesian breed.



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PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

The Royal Society 'Het Friesch Paarden-Stamboek'

TEXT: BODY BOSGRA

Oldest Horse Studbook of the Netherlands

The Friesian horse is the only native breed of the Netherlands with roots that go far back in time. The first illustrious tales even date back as far as the fourth century AD. At the time of the Crusades and later the Eighty Years' War, the Friesian breed was almost certainly crossbred with Arabian and Andalusian horses. Throughout the centuries Friesian horses were used for varying purposes and when their role threatened to become redundant towards the end of the nineteenth century, a select group of devotees came together in Roordahuizum, Friesland in 1879, and the society 'het Friesch Paarden-Stamboek' was founded. Since this time it has been the oldest Horse Studbook of the Netherlands. It acquired Royal status in 1954 and has ballooned into a global society with over 11,000 members spread across all continents in 84 countries, and a total of around 70,000 registered horses.

The Friesian horse – vibrant beauty

The Friesian horse has evolved to a globally adored and multi-talented utility horse with magnificent presence, intelligence and enormous readiness to serve mankind. Thanks to the consistent breeding policy of the Royal Friesian Horse Studbook (KFPS), the Friesian breed has succeeded in preserving the typical breeding characteristics of its ancient ancestors. Our black pearls are known for their characteristic front, abundant feathers, deep black coat colour and roomy, powerful and elevated paces. The harmonious build and noble head set on a slightly arched neck perfect this classy and proud appearance. Their friendly personality is the key to the lovely utility horses they are.

*There she is,
our Friesian horse.
Proud. Strong. Intelligent.
Looking just that
little bit superior.
As if she is aware of
her centuries-old heritage.
As if she is aware of the place
she has in so many hearts.*

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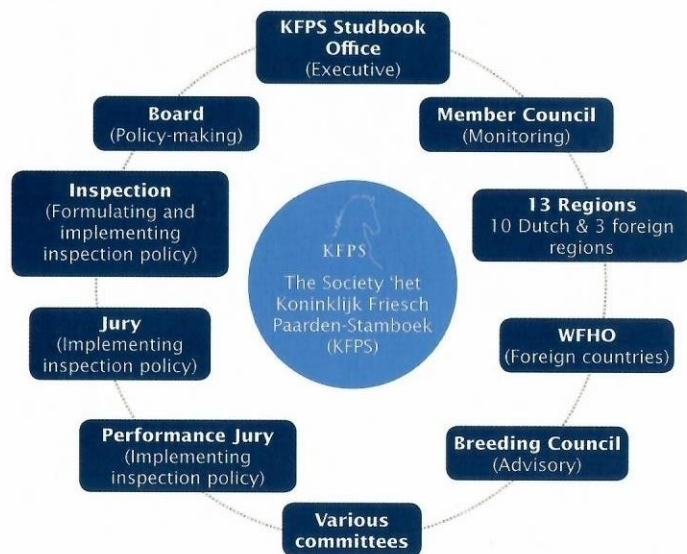
The Royal Society 'Het Friesch Paarden-Stamboek'

Throughout history there have always been people who have dedicated heart and soul to these majestic and good-natured Friesians. United in the KFPS they strive to preserve, improve, promote and advance the wellbeing of the Friesian breed with its characteristic exterior, movement and personality. The KFPS seeks to achieve these objectives by:

- establishing the breeding goal and the necessary policy;
- keeping Studbook registers and inspecting & assessing for acceptance in the Studbook;
- applying scientific knowledge relating to equine breeding;
- stimulating the use of the Friesian horse in sports and recreation.

KFPS organisation

The KFPS has developed into a major society with members all across the world. The members of this society are divided into ten Dutch and three foreign regions. Nearly all Dutch regions have their own breeding chapter which organises breeding days and inspections every year. The foreign countries are divided into the regions Germany, USA & Canada and other foreign countries and they too have their own breeding chapters. The highest body within the society is the Member Council which consists of representatives from the regions and which has a monitoring function. Further, the KFPS has a General Management with a policy-making function and complementary advisory councils, such as the Breeding Council and other committees. The inspection policy is laid down by the Inspection of the Studbook in consultation with the Member Council and subsequently implemented globally by a body of Jury members. Lastly, the KFPS has its Studbook office in Drachten, which is headed by a director. This is the place for all members to turn to



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in case they have any questions. Daily tasks such as the registration of horses in the Studbook are all carried out at the office location.

Closed Studbook

A studbook is literally a list of animals that are registered within the studbook, including the names of their owner, lineage and other relevant details. In bygone days this was an actual book in which these details were all written down with pen or pencil. Nowadays this information is all stored in a digital database and can be accessed by members. The KFPS Studbook strictly only accepts Friesian horses that meet the requirements of the Studbook. One key requirement is that both dam and sire of the horse in question are registered in the KFPS Studbook. Horses from other breeds or crossbreeds are not accepted for Studbook registration. This is called a closed studbook or closed breeding.

Breeding goal

In essence, a horse studbook is an association of people who seek to breed the ideal horse consistent with a specific horse breed. Such a description of the ideal horse is called the breeding goal. The KFPS breeding goal as well as the breeding- and selection policies are, partly on the recommendation of the Breeding Council and the Inspection, laid down by the Member Council. The essence of the KFPS breeding goal is described as follows:

'A functionally and harmoniously built utility horse possessing all Friesian breed characteristics, which is healthy and vital and has the aptitude to perform in the sport.'

A more detailed definition of this breeding goal in three components reads as follows: (1) Exterior & movement, (2) Use and (3) Health & vitality. Under 'Exterior & movement' follows a further definition of the breed characteristics, conformation and movement the ideal Friesian horse has to meet. In order to assess the extent to which Friesian horses meet these criteria, the Studbook and breeding chapters organise inspections within and outside the Dutch borders.

Inspections

Every year the KFPS and breeding chapters organise many inspections all over the world, which are only open to members. These are social gatherings during which KFPS-appointed judges inspect Friesian horses in various age categories and select the champions. For breeders and owners an inspection is the moment when their Friesian horses are judged on their qualities and when premiums and predicates are awarded. The annual highlights of all inspections are the Stallion Inspection in January and the Central Inspection in October. The Stallion Inspection and Friesian Proms are



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PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

THE HEAD

In the breeding goal the breed characteristic 'Head' is defined as follows: 'A small, expressive, noble head with eyes set wide apart. Preferably with a somewhat dished nasal bone. Wide nostrils, light jaws and a long mouth opening. Eyes large and bright. Small alert ears with tips slightly pointing at each other.'

unique events that take place in Leeuwarden, where education, a musical show programme and the inspection of stallions blend together into a true celebration. At the Stallion Inspection a new collection of young stallions is selected, who are given a chance to prove themselves later in the year, and the already approved

Studbook stallions are presented to the Jury and audience.

The Central Inspection in Drachten represents the conclusion of the inspection season and of several sport competitions. The best Friesian mares are invited to make a bid for the highest predicates and to join in the race for the Overall Championship. This event is also the venue for the finals of the competitions for young horses with dressage-, driving- and show driving aptitude. All these inspections and finals are windows that give the KFPS insight into the position of the Friesian horse in relation to the breeding goal.

Studbook registration, premiums and predicates

Every new-born Friesian foal that meets the requirements is registered in the so-called Foalbook, after microchipping. The foal's owner receives a certificate

Culture map



of registration and as a KFPS member has access to the aforementioned data base with information of all worldwide registered Friesian horses, including their own. From the age of three, mares, stallions and geldings can be registered in the Studbook. Prior to registration they have to be inspected by a KFPS Jury. For registration as a Studbook stallion horses have to follow an extensive test trajectory. Further details of this test can be found elsewhere in this book. Mares and geldings can be inspected by the judges at Studbook inspections or on breeding days. They can be registered in the Studbook provided they meet the breeding goal-related criteria to a satisfactory degree. Differentiation between horses is done by means of an elaborate system of premiums and predicates. For instance, a mare registered with a first premium is rated more highly than a mare with a third premium. Additionally, further differentiation between mares and geldings is done by awarding predicates, such as the Star-, Crown-, Model- and Sport predicates. More information on predicates can be found in Chapter 2 (page 20) of this book.

Comprehensive member services

The KFPS offers their members a comprehensive member service, both online and personally. Every month all Dutch KFPS members receive a copy of the informative and beautifully illustrated Phryso Magazine. This is the official KFPS monthly journal packed with current information on breeding, sport and people as well as happenings in the present and the past from both home and abroad. For members in foreign countries there is a digital monthly newsletter in English and Spanish which covers the most relevant articles of Phryso Magazine. More up-to-date information regarding a wide range of subjects, in Dutch and English, is available on www.phryso.com. The official KFPS website is www.kfps.nl. This website contains a



PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK

YOUNGKFPS

YoungKFPS has been introduced to target the younger generation between ages 16 to 35 with the specific aim to promote their involvement and enthusiasm in relation to breeding and sport with Friesian horses. This Young People's Branch of the KFPS organises a range of activities with the transfer of knowledge being a top priority, including visits to stud stables and organising courses, clinics and meetings to discuss current topics relating to breeding and the sport. Every year YoungKFPS awards the prize 'Young Breeder of the Year'. For more information on YoungKFPS please go to www.jongkfps.nl.

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host of practical to-the-point information on regulations and directives. In the section MyKFPS members have access to information concerning their own (and/or home-bred) horses and all KFPS stallions, mare lines, inbreeding coefficients, DNA tests and much more. For personal contact and for answers to all their queries members can get in touch with members from the KFPS team who are present at the office location in Drachten and at events.





FOTO: CALLY MATHERLY

Breeding

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TEXT: JANNA KROES

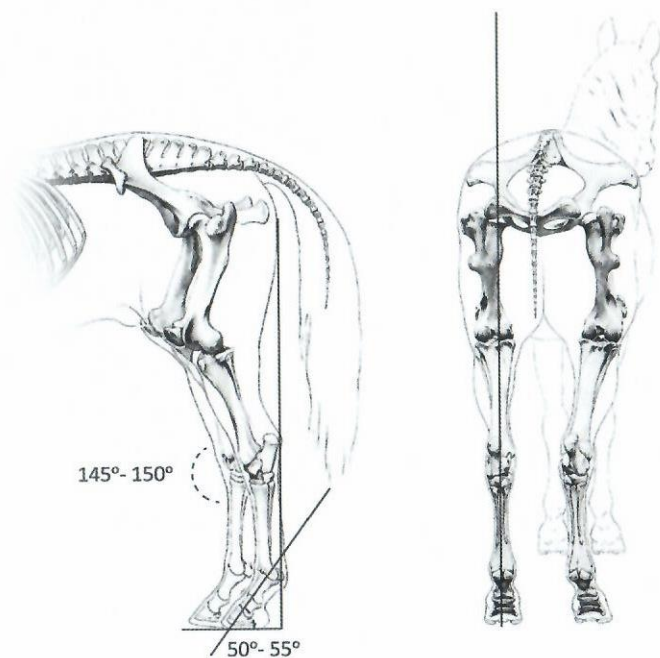
The exterior in relation to the breeding goal

Every breeding needs a breeding goal to be able to select the right horse so that the quality of the breed is preserved. That breeding goal has been defined in a joint effort of the KFPS bodies. Over the years it has been influenced by the changing functions of the Friesian horse. These days the use for the sport is an important component.

Breeding goal

The breeding goal of the Friesian horse reads as follows: 'A functionally and harmoniously built utility horse possessing all Friesian breed characteristics, that is healthy and vital and has the aptitude to perform in the sport.'

It is the context of the use of the Friesian horse here that is important. After the role they played in agricultural times the Friesian horse was gradually phased out by motorised horsepower, but fortunately they did not end up as 'just' a wonderful picturesque element in a panoramic landscape. Thanks to its outstanding and versatile character the breed has won a place in the hearts of so many. The element of sport has to be considered in a broad context. From recreational use under saddle and in-harness work right through to higher dressage, showdriving Honorary Classes and four-in-hand driving. The KFPS perspective is not to breed for top-class levels. When



Hind leg seen from the side

Hind leg seen from the back

Anyone who is interested in finding out and learning more about judging the Friesian horse: the KFPS has published the instruction guide 'Judging the Friesian Horse'. This guide forms the basis for the instruction courses which are given in the Netherlands as well as in foreign countries.

CONFORMATION AS DEFINED WITHIN THE BREEDING GOAL:

General

A horse with a harmonious, functional, proportionate and upward build with a long foreleg and not too heavily-built. The horse has a rectangular model with the proportions 1:1:1 for forehead, mid-section and hindquarters.

Head-neck connection

a. Poll

A long poll (width of one hand) with a flowing transition to the neck.

b. The throatlatch

The throatlatch has an open bottom line with room at the throat.

Neck

The neck is long, with good muscling along the crest, curving lightly. The neck rises high from the chest and has a flowing connection to the withers.

Shoulder

Shoulder conformation is long and sloping (at an angle with the horizontal line between 45 and 50°). The angle in the point of shoulder must be a minimum of 90°.

Ribcage

The ribs are long and well-sprung

Withers

The high withers have a flowing connection to the back.

Back

The back is strong and well-muscled (neither tight nor weak). The back has a flowing connection to the withers and loins. The length of the back is in proportion with the length of the forehead and hindquarters.

Loins

The loins are strong (neither raised nor sunken), wide and well-muscled with a flowing connection to the croup.

Croup

The croup is long (measured between the vertical lines of point of hip and seat bone), with a light slope and well-muscled.

Gluteal muscles

The gluteal muscles are long and well-developed.

Legwork

Forelegs and hind legs with correct stance The joints are hard and dry.

FORELEGS

Seen from the front and side, stance of the forelegs is vertical with the feet one hoof width apart. The forearm and the cannon bone are long.

HIND LEGS

Seen from the side the hind leg has an optimum angle. The hock joint is dry, hard and well-developed. Seen from behind, stance of the hind legs is parallel.

FETLOCKS AND PASTERNS

Seen from the side, the fetlock joints are oval-shaped and dry. The pasterns have satisfactory length and optimum stance.

FEET

The feet are a generous size, well-shaped and a symmetrical pair.

Friesian horses increasingly push their way up to Grand Prix level in all parts of the world, these are excellent accomplishments to be proud of, but not an aim in itself. The majority of users is active in grass-roots sports.

Harmonious build

But what exactly defines a functional and harmoniously-built utility horse?

Conformation and breeding type together make up the horse's exterior. The characteristics walk and trot are categorised under movement. There is a significant correlation between conformation and movement. A

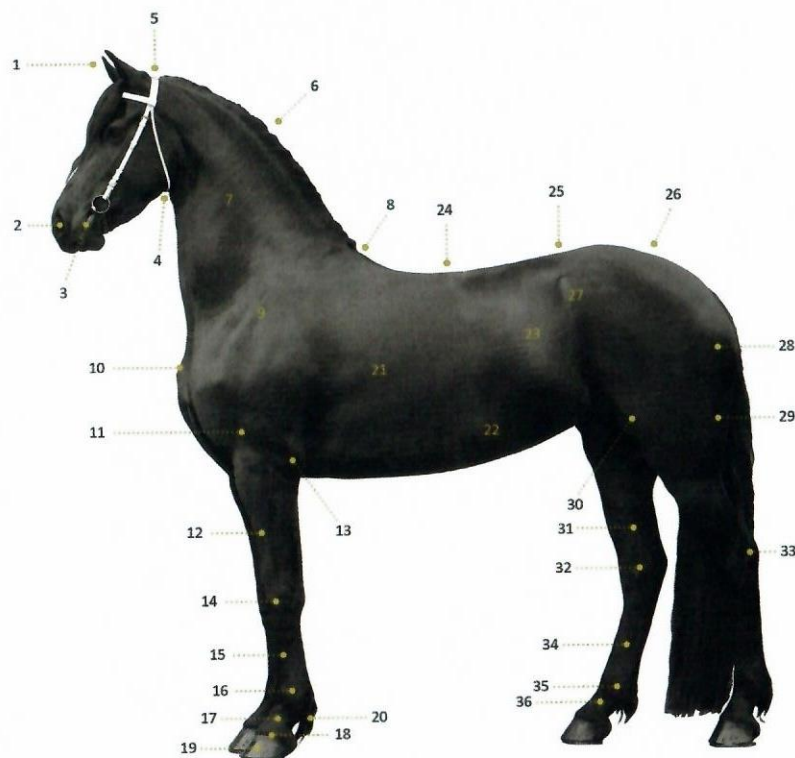
very good mover usually also has a good build and it works the same the other way around. An animal with for example soft, weak loins will never be able to move with very strong hindquarters. The strong 'bridge' between forehand and hindquarters is necessary for the transfer of power from back to front. Horses with strong loins can move with suppleness. To have expression and show harmony a good sport horse needs suppleness, that is one of the most important aspects.

A few functional characteristics in the spotlight

So loins, but also croup, back and withers have a strong influence on how the horse functions, which is why

LEGEND

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Ear | 19. Hoof |
| 2. Nostril | 20. Fetlock (sock) |
| 3. Mouth opening | 21. Ribs (ribcage) |
| 4. Throatlatch | 22. Belly |
| 5. Poll | 23. Flank |
| 6. Mane | 24. Back |
| 7. Neck | 25. Loins |
| 8. Withers | 26. Croup |
| 9. Shoulder | 27. Point of hip |
| 10. Chest (point of shoulder) | 28. Seat bone |
| 11. Upper arm | 29. Gluteal muscles |
| 12. Forearm | 30. Knee |
| 13. Elbow | 31. Gaskin |
| 14. Knee | 32. Point of hock |
| 15. Cannon | 33. Hock |
| 16. Fetlock | 34. Cannon bone |
| 17. Pastern | 35. Fetlock |
| 18. Coronet | 36. Pastern |



THE BREED STANDARD

The Royal and heart-warming appearance of the Friesian breed is unique in the horse world. It goes without saying that such a wonderful exterior with as its most eye-catching features the feathers, must be preserved. True, breed characteristics are especially pleasing to the eye, but some also have a certain influence on the use. The nicely-shaped neck line as mentioned earlier, definitely serves a purpose! It is not difficult to imagine that horses with heavy, narrow jaws and small nostrils struggle to inhale enough oxygen during the work. Wide nostrils and space between the well-shaped jaws determine how much oxygen can be transported to the lungs. A narrow chest has a similar, unfavourable influence.

these parts have to meet strong requirements. A horse with a weak back, or rather top line, will struggle to or not at all be declared Star. On average the Friesian horse has a slightly soft back and a lightly sloping croup. It is this softness that gives the Friesian horse its roomy and elevated paces, because long muscles are more supple than short, tight muscles. Rigorous selection procedures have to be in place to select only the best-quality animals. For, a croup with too much slope or a back which is too weak or tight is



unfavourable. The more slope there is in the hindquarters the more difficult it will be to develop a carrying hind leg. Rising in the front can only be achieved if the horse has sufficient power in the hindquarters and can carry itself. A horse that moves with true elevation brings the back end under its body, rises in the withers and then that magnificent picture of our proud Friesian horse appears.

In general, body shape of Friesian horses is a little downhill. However, an uphill build is necessary to transfer the weight to the hindquarters when the horse is moving. An animal that moves too much on the forehand because of downhill conformation puts too much weight on the forelegs. It cannot rise in the front and will develop movement-related problems. This is where the aspects health and vitality from the breeding goal come into play! Therefore this has become an important selection characteristic on inspection fields.


Uphill and proud

So a horse that moves in an uphill frame is not only functional, but also aesthetically pleasing. Another factor that plays a role is length of the foreleg. The breeding type average is a somewhat short foreleg; a remnant from agricultural times. This aspect has strongly improved over the past decades, partly because it was still possible to tap into the gene pool of the classier and more high-legged coach horse that was quite common before the agricultural era.

However, the occurrence of longer hind legs has also become more frequent in breeding. That is a less desirable development because obviously, taller horses need more balance and power. Balance is needed to move with relaxation and looseness. Horses without balance always tense up.

The above-mentioned aspects in conformation of the Friesian horse play an important role in balance, but the key factor is the neck. The neck acts like a bal-

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ancing pole, it is the counterweight of the body. A finely-shaped long neck with room for flexing is therefore vital. And beautiful to see too! Especially when the horse has abundant feathers and a head that corresponds with the breeding goal. Those animals have the 'golden touch', they are the ones that give us goose bumps. 

BREED CHARACTERISTICS WITHIN THE BREEDING GOAL

General

A horse that has an elegant and proud appearance, created by its characteristic front, abundant feathers, black coat colour and roomy, elevated paces (knee action).

Head

A small, expressive, noble head with eyes set wide apart. Preferably with a somewhat dished nasal bone. Wide nostrils, light jaws and a long mouth opening. Eyes are large and bright. Small alert ears with tips slightly pointing at each other.

Neck

The long neck and poll are set in a light upward arch with a high neck-carriage.

Feathers

The Friesian horse has abundant hair in mane, tail and socks (on lower legs).

Coat colour

Coat colour is jet black. White markings to the face are allowed if no larger than 3.2 cm and not below the eye line. White markings on other parts of the horse are not allowed.



Studbook registration: for the preservation of a unique horse breed

TEXT: BODY BOSGRA

The Friesian horse is a native Dutch breed that has not been crossbred with other breeds for over a century. A breed with unique characteristics such as jet black coat colour, a proud appearance with lovely paces and a friendly personality. Characteristics that have made the Friesian horse one of the most popular horse breeds in the world. Something to be cherished. In order to maintain the pureness and qualities of the Friesian horse breed the KFPS has devised a comprehensive system of inspections, assessments and registrations. This chapter deals with this system and how it works.

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A closed Studbook

The Royal Society The Friesian Horse Studbook (KFPS) is a closed studbook. This means that horses can only be registered if both parent animals have been accepted in the main section of the studbook and therefore meet the strict requirements the KFPS has defined for the Friesian breed. Crossbreeding with other breeds is not permitted. To safeguard the pureness of the breed as well as the KFPS breeding goal, any Friesian horse can only be accepted in one of the registers of the Studbook if it meets the requirements. The type of registers and requirements, including the corresponding qualifications (premiums and predicates), will all be discussed at length. But let's start with more information about how the Studbook has organised the 'book' that records all data of your Friesian horse.

'Studbook'

The objective of the KFPS is to preserve and improve the Friesian breed. A Friesian horse is defined as a horse that meets the criteria of the breed description as written down in the breeding goal, and whose parents are both registered in the main section of the Studbook. Therefore, one of the principal tasks of the Studbook is the registration of Friesian horses in the Studbook, similar to how national governments record and register personal details. In earlier times a 'studbook' was quite literally a book with several categories and all the horse's details were entered by hand. Nowadays, those details are recorded digitally in a data base, but the principle remains the same. The Studbook records all kinds of details of a Friesian horse such as name, registration number, breeder, owner, lineage, height at withers and awarded premiums and predicates. A precondition for Studbook registration is that the person in whose name the horse is registered, must be a member of the KFPS.

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Mainsections

Only offspring whose parents are both registered in the main section can themselves be accepted in the main section. Before acceptance in the main section of the Studbook a 3-years or older horse must be inspected.

Each foal will receive a studbook certificate after being chipped. This certificate is blue for the KFPS book and black for the other books.

SECTIONS	CHARACTERISTICS
Main section	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Both parents are registered in the main section.Prior to acceptance horses must be inspected.

Overview mainsection and preconditions for registration

Categories in the main section

The subsidiary section has no subdivisions but the main section has several subcategories. The main section differentiates between four categories or 'books':

- KFPS Book (main section)
- KFPS D-Book
- B-Book I:
- B-Book II:

IPPS register Stamboek Sier	geslacht Merrie	registratienummer 123456789101112	chipsnummer 121110987654321
14.04.2002 Vols M 01.06.2005 Siba Sier	Kleur Zwart Afhekening tongestaam Geen		2002: 1e premie 2003: 3e premie 2005: 1e premie 2006: 2e premie
Scholtheofte 100 om 01.06.2005			
naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer
naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer
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naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer
naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer
naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer	naam nummer



registratienummer
naam
Mary

naam van overdracht
R-10.2006 R-1234567
Eigenaar Hoofdweg 1
1000 AA Leerswarden NETH
okkeer: R-1234567
Eigenaar Hoofdweg 5
1000 AA Leerswarden NETH
Eigenaar: R-1234567
Eigenaar Hoofdweg 1
1000 AA Leerswarden NETH

The highest category is the KFPS Book. In this category those Friesian horses are registered whose parents are both (at the moment of conception) registered in the KFPS Book. The next category below the KFPS Book is the KFPS D-Book. Here those Friesian horses are registered that were sired by a stallion who has been approved by a daughter studbook of the KFPS within the EU. Friesian horses sired by a Foalbook stallion with a stud license are registered in B-Book I, depending the book of the mother. These stallions are stationed outside the Netherlands. B-Book II is the last of the four categories in the main section. Horses that were sired by a Foalbook stallion without a stud license are registered in B-Book II. The diagram below presents an overview of the preconditions for registration of Friesian horses in any of the four books of the main section.

CATEGORIES	ACCEPTANCE OF OFFSPRING BY:
KFPS Book	Sire registered in KFPS Book & dam registered in KFPS Book or dam registered in D-Book
KFPS D-Book	Sire approved by (EU-recognised and Hengstbuch I) KFPS daughter studbook & dam registered in KFPS Book or dam registered in D-Book
B-Book I:	Sire registered as Foalbook stallion with stud license & dam registered in KFPS Book or dam registered in D-Book or dam registered in B-Book I or dam registered in B-Book II, depending on generation interval
B-Book II:	Sire registered as Foalbook stallion without stud license or sire no longer approved as KFPS stud stallion at the moment of conception & dam registered in KFPS Book or dam registered in D-Book or dam registered in B-Book I or dam registered in B-Book II

Overview of the four categories in the main section of the Studbook and preconditions for registration

Under certain conditions, the offspring of a dam from a lower category can be promoted to a higher category. For example from B-Book I to the D-Book. The Registration Regulations on the KFPS website www.kfps.nl describe in detail in which cases this is possible. For all horses that are accepted in any of the four categories, the KFPS issues a Studbook certificate to the member in whose name the Friesian horse in question is registered. A Studbook certificate is blue, the other sections are black.

Registers

Within the four categories of the main section the horses are subdivided into registers according to gender. Foals that have not yet been identified i.e. have not been microchipped, are registered in the Preliminary Foal Register. This also applies to Friesian horses who are entered for acceptance in the Studbook at a later age. As soon as the foal or horse has been microchipped and verification of the parents (after DNA-test) has taken place, the horse is registered in the Foalbook and receives a Studbook certificate.

For acceptance in the Foalbook, inspection of the foal is not necessary. Inspection of the horse is mandatory for acceptance in any of the other three registers. Foalbook mares, -stallions and -geldings have to be at least three years old, need a minimum height at withers, have to meet requirements with regard to exterior and movement and have no unacceptable markings. The selection process Foalbook stallions have to complete is explained elsewhere in this book, including an extensive list of demands they have to meet for potential acceptance in the KFPS Studbook as a Studbook stallion.



PHOTO: MARTIN ZEIJNEK

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PHOTO: INGRID TRUIJENS



CHRISTA MERK

*The Studbook
records all kinds of
details of a Friesian
horse*

REGISTERS	EXPLANATION
Preliminary Foal Register (VVR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foals and horses without identification (microchip) ▪ Not registered in any category of the main section ▪ Not yet eligible for a Studbook certificate
Foal Book for stallions and mares (VB).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foals and horses with identification (microchip) ▪ Lineage verification has taken place ▪ Eligible for Studbook certificate ▪ Inspection is possible but not mandatory ▪ Premiums can be obtained at inspections
Studbook for mares (F)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ From the age of three ▪ Only after prior inspection ▪ Meet minimum requirements for exterior and movement ▪ Height at withers minimum of 1.54 m ▪ No unacceptable markings
Studbook for stallions (F)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Please consult page 52 in this book
Gelding Book (RB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ From the age of three ▪ Only after prior inspection ▪ Meet minimum requirements for exterior and movement ▪ Height at withers minimum of 1.56 m ▪ No unacceptable markings

Overview of the categorisation of the main section of the Studbook in five registers.

Inspections and premiums

As explained, if owners want their horses to be eligible for Studbook registration the horses must first be entered for an inspection. To this purpose, the KFPS, breeding chapters and foreign daughter associations annually organise a series of inspections both within and outside the Netherlands, in as many areas as possible across the Netherlands and the rest of the world. This is a list of the types of inspections:

1. Studbook inspections
2. Breeding days
3. Foal inspections
4. Foal Book stallion inspections
5. Central Inspection
6. Stallion Inspection

During these inspections the qualities of the entered Friesian horses are judged by specially trained KFPS Jury members. They assess how the inspection horse measures up in relation to the breeding goal. For owners (and breeders) inspections are perfect opportunities to gain insight into their horse's qualities. In order to express these qualities the KFPS uses a premium system that consists of a first, second or third



PHOTO: JOHANNA FABER

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STUDBOOK INSPECTIONS AND BREEDING DAYS

Inspections are organised by the KFPS as well as the so-called breeding chapters. In the Netherlands, the KFPS has ten breeding chapters that are divided geographically across the country. The activities of these breeding chapters include the organisation of breeding days where members can enter their Friesian horses for inspections. Breeding days are open to nearly all inspection categories (see below) known within the KFPS. This is not the case with Studbook inspections, which are organised by the KFPS itself. These inspections are open for the inspection of foals, 3-year-old mares and geldings for acceptance in the Studbook and 4-year-old- and older Studbook mares and geldings for Star declaration.

premium or no premium. The highest award is a first premium and the lowest is no premium. Even if a 3-year-old mare or gelding does not receive a premium it can still be accepted in the Studbook, but every owner is keen to acquire a first premium for his or her apple of the eye. In addition to premiums, the KFPS works with a series of predicates for even more differentiation in quality between Friesian horses.

Predicates

Within registers, further differentiation with respect to the horse's quality is done by means of predicates. The KFPS awards these predicates on the basis of a horse's individual qualities or on the basis of his or her offspring. Additionally, predicates can be based on exterior and movement, sport aptitude or sport performances or on a combination of these. The Model predicate for instance, is rated higher than the Star predicate. The KFPS differentiates between the following predicates for 3-year-old or older mares, stallions and geldings:

MARES	STALLIONS	GELDINGS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Star predicate ▪ Crown predicate ▪ Model predicate ▪ Sport predicate ▪ Sport Elite predicate ▪ Preferent status ▪ Performance dam predicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Star predicate ▪ Sport predicate ▪ Sport Elite predicate ▪ Preferent status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Star predicate ▪ Sport predicate ▪ Sport Elite predicate

Overview of the predicates for mares, stallions and geldings that can be awarded.

Star predicate

The Star predicate is awarded at inspections for Friesian horses starting with the year in which the horses turn three and with a minimum height of 1.56 m for mares and 1.58 m for stallions/geldings. The Star www.friesianhorse.ir

predicate can be awarded to Studbook mares, Gelding Book geldings and Foal Book stallions. To be eligible for the Star predicate the horse has to meet several minimum requirements for exterior, movement and height at withers. To be awarded the Star predicate the mare or gelding must have acquired at minimum a first or second premium. Differentiation between Foalbook stallions only takes place based on Star or not Star.

Crown predicate

A mare can be declared Crown if she meets specific requirements for exterior and sport aptitude and has a minimum age of three. To be eligible for the Crown predicate the mare must have acquired a first premium in the same year she is declared Crown at the Central Inspection. In addition to the first premium the mare must have a minimum height of 1.58m and demonstrate her aptitude for the sport. This can be done by completing a so-called performance test (ABFP or IBOP) or by obtaining the Sport predicate. In case the aptitude for the sport cannot be substantiated by either of these two options, the mare receives a Preliminary Crown predicate.

Model predicate

The best mares of the population will be considered for the Model predicate. This predicate also includes requirements for exterior and sport aptitude. The mare must have a minimum age of seven, a minimum height of 1.60m and must either have a foal at her side or have given birth to a foal in an earlier year. Selection for the (Preliminary) Model predicate also takes place during the Central Inspection. Eligible for Model declaration are Star mares and Crown mares who achieved a first-premium in that same year. A Star mare who has not yet confirmed to have satisfactory sport aptitude has to provide proof of her sport aptitude and will be declared Preliminary Model.

Predicate Sport and Sport Elite

Eligibility for the Star-, Crown- and Model predicates relies on a combination of exterior and sport aptitude, but for the Sport predicate only the results in competition sports count. This can be in dressage-, driving- or showdriving sports. Friesian horses that have achieved exceptional results in competition sports are awarded the highest Sport predicate: Sport Elite.

Preferent status mares

The Preferent predicate is granted on the basis of the quality of the offspring. Mares that are registered in the Foalbook or Studbook and have produced a minimum of four good-quality horses such as Star mares or Studbook stallions, are automatically given Preferent status, even posthumously.

Preferent status stallions

Preferent status can be granted to Studbook stallions who have shown to have a lasting and exceptionally positive influence on the breed. Whether a stud stallion has accumulated sufficient points to be eligible for Preferent status is calculated on the basis of predicates

(including weighing factors) of the stallion's offspring. Examples of Preferent stallions who are still alive are Beart 411, Norbert 444 and Tsjalle 454.

Performance dam

The predicate Performance dam is reserved for dams with three direct offspring who have acquired the Sport predicate or have completed an aptitude test (ABFP or IBOP) of at least 75 points.

Inspection categories

With the exception of the Foalbook stallion inspection which is only open to Foalbook stallions, the KFPS works with an extensive set of inspection categories. In all these categories the presented Friesian horse's qualities are assessed by a skilled team of Jury members. The inspection of youngsters up to the age of three (foals, yearlings and 2-year-olds) can as yet not lead to acceptance in the Studbook: for acceptance mares, stallions and geldings have to be at least three years old. The following overview lists all inspection categories and at which type of inspection these categories are included.

INSPECTION CATEGORY	TYPE OF INSPECTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Inspections for colt- and filly foals▪ Premium inspections for yearling mares▪ Premium inspections for yearling stallions▪ Premium inspections for 2-year-old mares▪ Premium inspections for 2-year-old stallions▪ Studbook acceptance mares (min. 3 years old)▪ Acceptance in Gelding Book (min. 3 years old)▪ Inspections for Star predicate (mares and geldings)▪ Premium inspections for 4-year-old and older Star mares▪ Premium inspections for Star geldings▪ Premium inspections for Crown mares▪ Premium inspections for Model mares▪ Inspections 3-year-old and older stallions for Star predicate▪ Inspections mares for Crown predicate▪ Inspections mares for Model predicate▪ Inspection stallions for acceptance as Studbook stallion	<p>Studbook inspection, Foalbook inspection or breeding days</p> <p>Breeding days</p> <p>Breeding days</p> <p>Breeding days</p> <p>Breeding days, Foalbook inspections (only acceptance-no premium)</p> <p>Studbook inspection or breeding days</p> <p>Studbook inspection or breeding days</p> <p>Studbook inspection or breeding days</p> <p>Breeding days</p> <p>Breeding days</p> <p>Breeding days</p> <p>Breeding days</p> <p>Foal Book stallion inspection</p> <p>Central Inspection</p> <p>Central Inspection</p> <p>Stallion Inspection and Central Examination</p>

Overview inspection categories and type of inspections that include these categories.

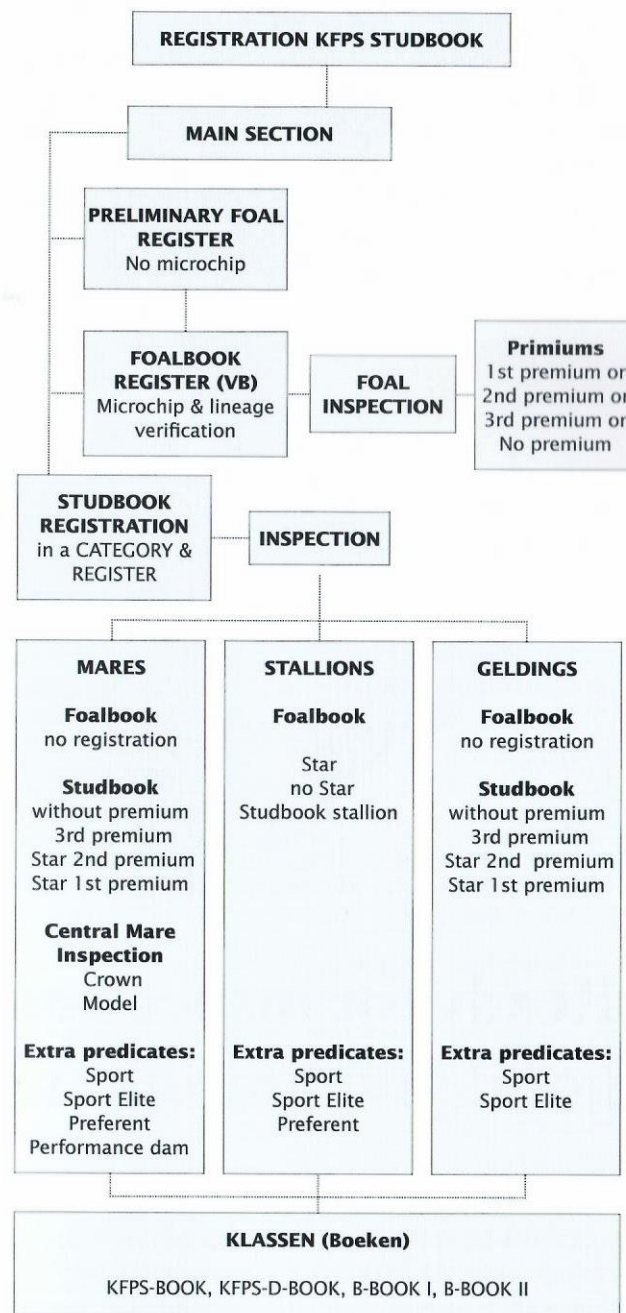
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PHOTO: CHRISTA MERK



Valuable contribution

The Royal Society The Friesian Studbook is a professionally organised society that safeguards the pureness, vitality and health of the Friesian horse breed. This is made possible with the application of an ingenious system of inspections, premiums, predicates and registration. Members of the KFPS are in a position to contribute actively to the quality, health and vitality of the Friesian horse. If your mare is expecting a foal then please timely notify the Studbook for identification and registration in the Foalbook. If you own a 3-year-old or older Friesian mare or gelding then enter your horse for inspection and registration in the Studbook. By doing so you make a valuable contribution to the future of the Friesian breed and who knows, you and your horse may even secure a predicate.





Ready for inspections: good preparation is the key

TEXT: BODY BOSGRA

After three years the moment is there: your youngster is ready to go to the inspection to demonstrate what it is worth. It is the big moment when you hope your Friesian horse will put its best foot forward. Hope springs eternal but this is not enough to bring out the best at inspections. To achieve that, timely and thorough preparations are the absolute key ingredients. What is the best approach?

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Correct knowhow

Previously, practically everyone used to present their horses themselves or in any case, preparing for inspections was done at home. In those days going to inspections was primarily a happy day out for the family. But these things have changed. The social aspect is still important but the chief emphasis now lies on inspection results. Quite understandable, because usually there is a lot at stake. When global interest for the Friesian breed ballooned from the 1980s onwards, its financial value also rocketed. That's why the Friesian horse is sometimes dubbed 'The Black Gold'. Perhaps this is what made more and more owners decide to leave the presenting as well as preparing for inspections to professional training stables. This is not a cheap option though, and with the correct expertise there is so much you can do yourself to prepare for inspections.

Starting point is basic training

To get the best out of your horse at inspections then it is key to start early and thoroughly prepare your horse. It is obvious though, that a horse's exterior and movement cannot in fact be changed. But by giving it the right training, a good feeding regime and good care you will be able to show off your horse's qualities to maximum effect at inspections. Point of departure in this context are three years- and older mares and geldings that have undergone proper basic schooling. If this is not the case your first priority is to get your horse used to being handled and accept activities like in-hand walking, grooming, clipping, washing and lunging. At inspections a horse needs to demonstrate the quality of its movement but it is also required to stand still properly. Take your time to prepare your horse for this. The best approach is to start about eight weeks prior to the day of the inspection.

Training on the lunge

A horse to be inspected by a jury has to be in good condition, which requires correct training and a good feeding regime. As far as training goes, a young horse cannot be propelled into hard work just like that. Better practice is to start with short, regular bits of training and offer lots of variety. One or two short sessions are better than training for up to a whole hour at a time. Good initial training for young stock is lunging. If you do not have a lunging facility at your disposal then stake out a circle of 16.5 metres in diameter. In this fenced-off circle the horse will be guided by the outer edge so that it cannot fall out over the shoulder. During the first three weeks the horse should be lunged with side-reins three to four times a week for about fifteen minutes. The side-reins are used to encourage the horse to go 'forward and down', which helps to round its back, loosen as well as build muscles so that he will become stronger in the hindquarters. Keep building your training sessions in a quiet and playful way so that the horse learns to relax during work without slowing down. After three weeks you can start to increase your lunging to half-an-hour sessions four times a week. Ask your horse to make lots of walk-trot-walk transitions. This will strengthen his back end where the 'engine' is.

TIP

Maybe your horse is already getting some under-saddle or in-harness training. Experience has shown that these horses often have problems with in-hand walking and standing at the halt for longer periods at a time. Early on in the training your horse must be taught how to walk and trot and stand still when being led in-hand.

Mimicking inspection conditions

After each training session the horse should be hosed down with lukewarm water and then walked in-hand for around ten minutes. This has a double function because

it is a good cool-down and at the same time it teaches the horse obedience when being led in-hand. Remember to walk the horse to the right like it is done in the inspection ring. If in any way possible it is a good idea to mimic inspection settings two weeks before date. For this purpose you can mark out a triangle with all sides measuring 60 metres. You could add a flag, put up a party tent or parasol and introduce the horse to umbrellas. Just about anything that helps to imitate inspection conditions is a useful training for your mare to desensitise her and prepare her for the event. Walk your horse in-hand through this triangle and make sure to include the corners.

Peace and quiet and relaxation

Practise the in-hand walking and standing at the halt the same way as required in the ring. In the initial stages of the in-hand walking sessions it is quite useful to ask a helper along to keep the horse moving forward in case it stops. Tack the horse up with a bridle so that you have a bit more authority. Teach your horse to walk briskly along to avoid pulling at the bridle. Walking the horse on a regular basis makes horses very manageable which is going to pay dividends in the inspection ring. When the horse is lined up it must stand still properly with the forelegs next to each other and one hind leg a bit more forward than the other one. When in-hand walking and lining up works well in the environment your horse is familiar with, then try going to another place for a change. After all, the inspection takes place in an unknown environment too and that might cause the horse to tense up, which is something to be avoided. It gives you a chance to practise trailer loading and transporting your horse too. All this practising helps your horse to get used to inspection conditions where he is expected to perform at his very best. Always work with the focus on quiet and relaxation: it will be worth your effort.

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TIP

A sweaty horse that is turned out in the blazing sun will quickly lose its blackness and turn a brown colour. It is good practice therefore to always hose the horse down first with lukewarm water after training.

Grooming and shoeing

Lunge the horse until five days prior to the inspection and from that time keep it stabled and give it some off-time. Just walk it every day in a bridle for about fifteen minutes. Four days before the inspection is the time to concentrate on grooming. Trim the chin but leave the whiskers around the muzzle and only trim back the hairs that stick out beyond the edges of the ears. Trimming on the inside of the ears is prohibited and can lead to disqualification. Even though shoeing is not mandatory it enhances the overall picture when horses are shod on all fours. This has the added advantage that when the inspection is held on grass, the irons can be fitted with studs for a better grip. Shoeing should be done a fortnight in advance of the event: this will give the horse sufficient time to get used to the 'new shoes'. One day before the inspection you should give the horse a shampoo, comb through the hairs and give it a good brush-over. On the day of the inspection the feet can be blackened with black hoof polish.

Feeding

Along with correct training, a good feeding regime is key for your horse's condition. From the time you start the training keep the horse stabled and combine that with turn-out time in the paddock. A horse that has been foraging on fresh grass until this moment is usually too rich in condition. The horse needs to develop dry and strong muscles through fittening work. Correct feeding of horses requires something of



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*At inspections a horse
needs to demonstrate the
quality of its movement
but it is also required to
stand still properly*



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*The horse needs
to develop dry and
strong muscles
through fittening
work*



a master's eye but as a general rule you could stick to the following feeding regime. Start with two daily feeds of forage and half a kilo of hard feed. Then you should gradually decrease the amount of forage and increase the amount of hard feeds. Four weeks in advance of the inspection start feeding oats: half a scoop twice daily. Three weeks before the inspection you can progress to feeding half a scoop three times a day and two weeks in advance step it up to a full scoop three times a day. Oats is a great energy source for horses. Exactly how much forage and hard feed should be fed is difficult to say, because there is no such thing as an average horse and every horse reacts differently to feeds. So if you have little or no experience in this area do not hesitate to ask an expert for advice, they will be only too glad to help.

TIP

Oats should always be fed separately from the other hard feeds. If you do not feed it separately then the horse will not grind the oats properly and it will leave the system virtually undigested via the droppings.

Inspection day

And then the great moment has come: the day of the inspection. If you have to travel quite some distance then hire a box in the vicinity of the inspection venue. If you arrive on the day itself then make sure to arrive at the inspection grounds at least one hour in advance to give your horse some time to recover from the journey. At the administrative office you need to present the horse's passport including all vaccinations and you will be given a bridle number which you have to tie to the bridle with a cable tie aka Ty-Rap. Give your horse a final brush-over. Horses that are here for acceptance in the Studbook first need to be measured for height at withers by the Jury or a measuring team. Take your horse to the inspection ring ten minutes ahead of schedule.

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TIP

Do not take an inspection horse to the inspection ring one hour or more ahead of schedule and stand there in the hot sun or pouring rain. That will eat away his energy and stop him from showing off for the judges when he is finally allowed in the ring.

Presenting and judging

Presenting horses to the best of their ability is an art in itself. This is the reason why most breeding chapters within and outside the country invite professional runners to present the horses. These people know the tricks of the trade. And if this is not an option there are probably runners from professional stables who are quite willing to present your horse for a small fee. Make sure to arrange this well in advance because they are usually quite busy with their 'own' horses. If this option is not available or if you are keen to present your horse yourself then keep the following in mind:

The ring master will invite you, your horse and the assistant into the ring. You line your horse up in front of the Jury and make sure it stands still. On the basis of the linear score form the Jury first assesses the horse on exterior characteristics as well as breeding type, conformation and legwork. The jury will then signal you to walk the horse around the triangle for assessment of the walk. Finally, you and the assistant make the horse trot two rounds through the ring in an active but relaxed manner so that the Jury gets a chance to assess the last item on the linear score form: the trot. Then comes the most exhilarating moment of the inspection: the result. You and your horse have worked towards this moment for weeks. But always remember that whatever the result may be, training, presenting and caring for Friesian horses is a fascinating, thrilling and educational process.



Breeding values: a reliable tool for breeding

TEXT: MARIJE STOMPS

www.friesianhorse.ir

A Friesian horse that is registered with the KFPS and has been to an inspection has a breeding value estimate. Breeding values reflect a horse's genetic blueprint for a specific exterior- or movement characteristic. Clever use of these breeding values increases the chances of breeding good-quality foals - and in the long term an increasingly better population of Friesian horses.

From data to breeding values

Breeding values comprise a long list of a horse's exterior- and movement characteristics. The breeding value is a ratio – with 100 as the average – that represents a horse's genetic predisposition for that specific characteristic. Therefore the breeding value indicates how this characteristic is passed on to offspring. The breeding values are the result of filtering all available information on this horse and its relatives. Examples are the linear scores a horse gets at inspections, results of aptitude- and sport tests, the scores of Friesian stallions at their approval, and so on. The more data of a horse and its relatives are available, the more reliable the breeding value estimate will be. The data of close relatives carry more weight than the data of relatives further removed in kinship.

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Exterior- and sport aptitude

The breeding values of Friesian horses are calculated annually in December. KFPS breeding value estimates are composed of several aspects (see diagram). The 'breeding values exterior linear' are available for every Friesian horse registered in the Studbook. They contain 26 linear characteristics of the horse that fall within two extremes, which therefore have opposite labels. For the first characteristic 'head' for instance, these are 'plain' and 'noble'. The bar in the middle reveals the horse's genetic predisposition to either side. Are the squares situated more to the left, which indicates 'plain', then chances are the horse itself has a plain head and is likely to pass that on to offspring. This probability is also expressed in a score, with the score of 100 being the average of the entire Friesian horse

EXAMPLE: MARE WITH A WEAK BACK

How can breeding values be used in practice? Say, a Friesian mare scores 94 points on the back (conformation). That is a considerable deviation towards 'weak'. Consequently, this mare has a genetic disposition for a weak back. Best practice then is to select a stallion with a back that leans towards 'tight' so that hopefully it will compensate for the mare's weak back. The breeding value of their future foal is easy to calculate by adding up the breeding values of both dam and sire and divide by two. If for example, the stallion has 110 points for this characteristic, then the foal will have a breeding value of $(94+110=204 \text{ divide by } 2) = 102$. That considerably reduces the risk of a foal with a weak back. The possibility always remains that the foal turns out to have a weak back, in spite of the positive breeding value expectation. This chance is lower if the reliability indexes of the sire and dam's breeding values are high. But there is always a possibility, because the foal gets genes from both dam and sire. If the sire happens to pass on the 'negative' genes for this characteristic then in combination with the dam's genes this can produce a weak back. Vice versa is also possible: a stallion and mare who both have a weak back can, if they pass on the most positive genes for this aspect, still produce offspring with normal back conformation.



population for this specific characteristic. A Friesian with a breeding value of 100 for the head/facial expression has therefore an average head. From a genetic point of view, a horse with 108 for the head is 8 breeding value points better with regard to the head than an average Friesian horse. It is then much more likely that the horse will pass that noble head on to its offspring.

Under the heading 'breeding values exterior assessment aspects' the above linear characteristics of the horse are summed up in five aspects, which are: breeding type, conformation, legwork, walk and trot. There are additional breeding values for sport aptitude. These are not available for every Friesian horse because the horse in question must have completed an aptitude test or must have competed in the sport. If

that is the case, these breeding values are a reliable indication of a horse's genetic predisposition to perform under saddle, in driving or show driving. An extra breeding value is given for the paces.

Reliability

Since the end of the previous century the KFPS has published breeding value estimates for the population of Friesian horses in the Studbook. This has yielded a wealth of information in relation to exterior characteristics and aptitude for the sport and movement of Friesians. The breeding value estimate is also linked to a reliability index, expressed in a percentage. This score indicates the extent to which the horse is expected to pass those characteristics on to its offspring. Generally, the reliability index of young

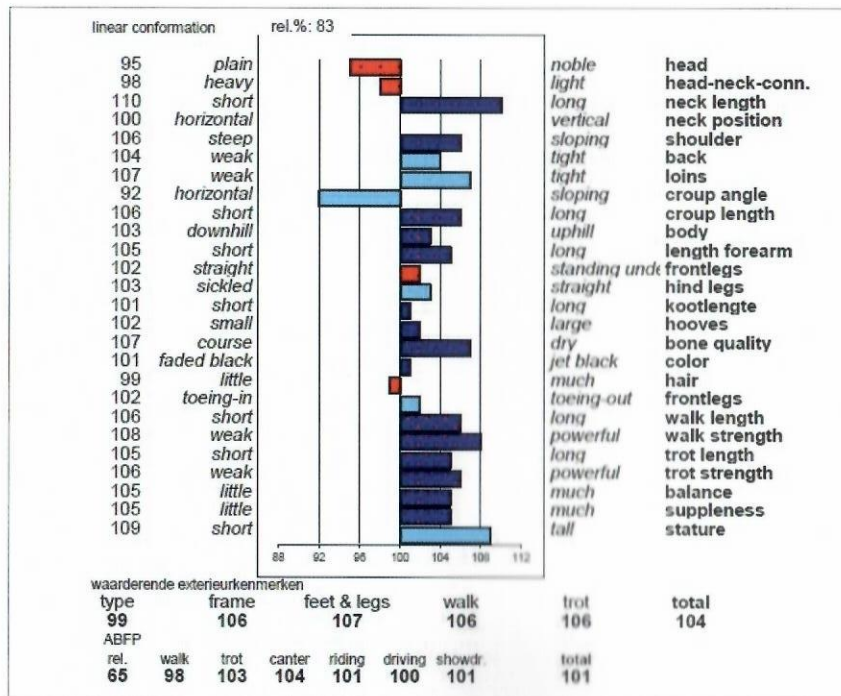


PHOTO: DIGISHOTS



PHOTO: ACOMIER JELLEMA



PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK

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*Breeding values reflect
a good indication of a
horse's genetic blueprint*

horses is low (around 45%). This is because so far, not many data have been collected, they have not yet been inspected, have not completed any test or taken part in competition sports. As soon as they do, these scores will be added to the breeding value estimate and the reliability score goes up. The reliability score increases even further when a horse has produced offspring that in turn, are also inspected and perform in sports. Therefore an older, approved stallion with many offspring can advance to a reliability rate of 92%. This implies that if this stallion has a breeding value of 110 for 'breeding type' (exterior assessment aspect) it can safely be assumed that chances are high his offspring will also have a lot of breeding type (92%).

Breeding values for stallion choices

Collecting breeding values is not done just for the fun of it. It provides very useful information for both the Studbook (comprehensive information regarding the population of Friesian horses) and individual breeders. Breeders have access to the breeding values of their horse(s) on the KFPS website under MyKFPS, or they can request these data from the Studbook. The breeding values reveal the strong and less strong points of a horse and to what extent these may be passed on to offspring. Which is very practical when stallion choices have to be made for breeding foals. Even though most breeders are well aware of their mare's good and weak points, these breeding values offer valuable support. The scores show up which characteristics the mare will positively pass on to offspring and which characteristics need improving. Pairing the mare to a stallion who is expected to embed the strong points and improve the weaker points, raises the chance of breeding a better-quality foal.

Stallions, obviously, do not score above-average marks for all breeding value characteristics. That is not so much of an issue if the mare has a high breeding value

Even though most breeders are well aware of their mare's good and weak points, these breeding values offer valuable support for making stallion choices

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for that specific characteristic. If a stallion with a lower reliability index is chosen then there is less chance the foal will be of better quality than its parents as compared to a stallion with a high reliability index. But across the board, younger stallions (with lower reliability index) have a better genetic blueprint than the older generation. So breeding values are a valuable tool to make well-informed stallion choices. It helps breeders to include not only his/her own impressions of mare and stallion along with their 'breeding instinct', but also helps to base their choice on facts and figures. It will considerably increase the chances of a foal which is of better quality than the dam, because figures are as plain as day.



Inbreeding and kinship within the Friesian breed

TEXT: MIRJAM HOMMES

www.friesianhorse.ir

Our aim is to breed healthy Friesian horses that are durable and suitable for recreational use and the sport. Paying attention to inbreeding is essential in any breeding programme to prevent illnesses and defects. This is where breeders come into play because they can help to curb inbreeding and make sure that kinship within the population cannot grow. But what exactly are the ins and outs of inbreeding and kinship?

Nearly extinct

There are two episodes in the history of the Friesian horse when the breed was very close to extinction. In 1913 only three Studbook stallions remained available. People started to breed a heavier and smaller type of Friesian horses who were more suited for agricultural work. The population started growing again but in the 60s of the previous century the Friesian horse faced another struggle in the wake of mechanisation in agriculture. In 1965 the Studbook numbered just 500 mares. Thanks to a good promotional campaign the KFPS has managed to turn the tide. All over the Netherlands and later also far outside our borders, people have made the acquaintance of the Friesian horse. In breeding the classier sport type became popular again.

All related

These days over 70,000 Friesian horses are registered in over 84 countries and there are about 90 active stud stallions. That may seem a lot but this is still rather modest for a breed and we must take into account that the KFPS is a closed studbook. Which means it is not allowed to use foreign – i.e. completely unrelated – breeds for breeding. Because the breed has gone through two phases of near extinction which resulted in a very small population of Friesians, all present-day Friesians hark back to those few remaining individuals. So all Friesian horses are related to each other! For breeding it is therefore important to take this kinship into account. For this purpose two different index numbers are available: the inbreeding- and kinship percentages.

What is inbreeding?

Inbreeding is an indicator that a foal's sire and dam have common ancestors. The pedigrees of Friesian horses show that the occurrence of common ancestors

mainly dates back to further removed generations in their lineage.

Inbreeding increases the chances of impaired health and reduced fertility in horses. Moreover, there is an increased risk of hereditary defects. Two of the most common defects within the Studbook are dwarfism and hydrocephaly, for which the KFPS has an extensive testing programme in place. The prevailing opinion in sciences is that genetics probably also play a part in disorders such as oesophageal paralysis, aortic rupture, sweet itch and some eye disorders. As yet, no tests are available for these disorders.

Carrier status but not affected

These hereditary defects are usually absent in animals with a low kinship, or they are not affected by it. In the case of for example dwarfism and hydrocephaly, an individual may be a carrier of the genes but still, the disorder does not manifest itself. However, as soon as two carriers of the same disorder are paired to each other then the foal has a 25% risk of developing the defect. That is why it is absolutely key to keep inbreeding to a minimum and to find out if your mare and the stallion of your choice are carriers of common disorders. In order to breed a healthy foal you are advised to check on the KFPS website whether or not a stallion has positive carrier status for dwarfism or hydrocephaly. In addition, all Star mares have to undergo testing for carrier status of these two disorders.

Less genetic variation

Generally speaking, a side effect of inbreeding is reduced genetic variation within the breed. Differences in the genetic material of animals from the same breed make that every individual is unique. So, little genetic variation within a breed means fewer unique genes. In the long run that is bound to have an

adverse effect on the progress of the Studbook as well as on the development of the horses.

Inbreeding percentage below 5%

A Friesian horse's inbreeding percentage on its Studbook paper is calculated on the basis of the first five generations in the pedigree. If for instance, a foal's dam and sire both stem from the same grandfather, then the foal has a high inbreeding percentage. But if common ancestors are only found in the fifth generation the inbreeding percentage is considerably lower.

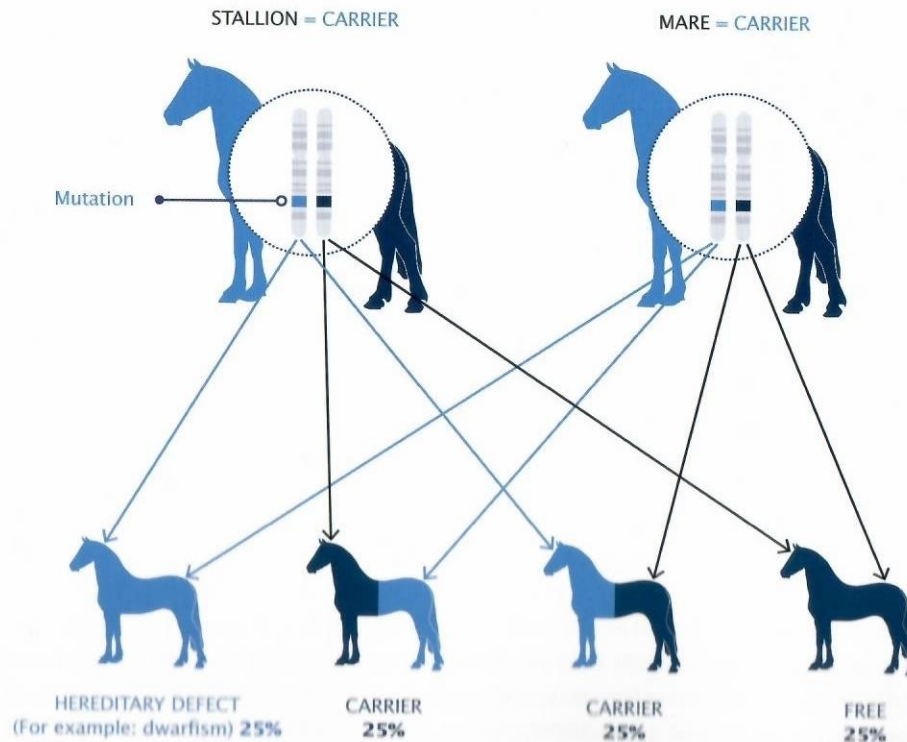
In our efforts to eliminate diseases and genetic defects wherever possible, the longstanding aim of the KFPS was to limit the inbreeding percentage over five generations to below this 5%, which has worked quite well in recent years. In a bid to curb inbreeding even further, the KFPS website offers breeders the possibility to calculate the inbreeding percentage over six generations. That figure will always be higher than over five generations because more horses are involved and in the end, they are all related. For intended pairings the current general advice given is to keep the inbreeding over six generations under 5%.

INHERITANCE PATTERNS DWARFISM GENE OR HYDROCEPHALY GENE

0%

DWARFISM X HYDROCEPHALY A RISK?

The dwarfism gene and hydrocephaly gene are located on two different genes Carrier of dwarfism x carrier of hydrocephaly: 0% risk



25%

RISKY MATCHES

The only chance of (25%) dwarfism or hydrocephaly if:

- both parents are carrier
- both parents pass on the same 'wrong' gene

Summarising, the inbreeding percentage is an indicator of the chances for genetic disorders in a foal and is especially important for stallion choices. Full brothers and sisters have exactly the same inbreeding percentage, which stays the same for the entire duration of their lives.

What is kinship percentage?

The tool to define the kinship between all Friesian horses is called the kinship percentage. This percentage indicates the degree of kinship of one individual with all other Friesian horses. The kinship percentage is calculated on the basis of all known generations within the Studbook and currently averages between 17 and 18%. The worldwide standard for the increase of inbreeding is no more than 1% per generation, otherwise the existence of the species will be put at risk. European legislation therefore dictates that studbooks like the KFPS have to limit the inbreeding increase to below that 1%. The aim of the Studbook therefore is to use the kinship percentage as a tool to keep the increase of inbreeding within the entire population to a minimum. Breeders are encouraged to include both the inbreeding percentage as well as the kinship percentage in their stallion choices. So although kinship and inbreeding are closely related, the two percentages clearly provide different information. Horses with a low inbreeding percentage can have a high kinship percentage and vice versa. In the course of a horse's life the kinship percentage can change, which is especially relevant for stud stallions. When stallions sire large numbers of offspring – even more so in case of approved sons – then over the years they become related to more and more Friesian horses and hence their kinship percentage rises.





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*Horses with a low
inbreeding percentage
can have a high
kinship percentage
and vice versa*

Low-kinship stallions and stud limitations

In order to curb the increase of inbreeding, the advice is to make more use of low-kinship stallions for pairings. A low kinship percentage is therefore considered an asset for potential stud stallions and low-kinship stallions are given more opportunities to prove themselves in the stallion inspection process. Obviously, it is down to the stallion to fulfil all the other relevant characteristics like good breed expression, good conformation and legwork, a good walk and trot as well as a pleasing and trainable personality. To maintain a healthy population it is essential to have lower-kinship stallions available for the breeders. This is the reason why there is a stud limitation of 180 stud services for young stallions. Young stallions are usually very popular and many of their approved sons



PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK

come from their first crop of offspring. A stud limitation can help to prevent a sudden rise in the kinship percentage of such a stallion and his offspring and offers breeders more opportunities to view a stallion's breeding products before the stallion's stud limitation is lifted.

Use of tools for stallion choices


When making stallion choices, breeders should initially select stallions who, in combination with their mares, give an inbreeding percentage of 5% or lower over six generations. Next, stallions with a low kinship percentage should be favoured so that the variation in the population is maintained. Obviously, other factors such as the breeding values of the mare and your breeding goal also play a role in stallion choices. 



PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

Selection procedures for KFPS Studbook stallions

TEXT: BODY BOSGRA
www.friesianhorse.ir

Every committed breeder of Friesian horses dreams of breeding an approved stallion. But the chances are slim, statistics teach us. But that only makes the yearning grow stronger. Now how does this selection process from foal to stud stallion work and why do so few Friesian stallions rise to the high status of KFPS Studbook stallion?

Better chances with the best broodmares

The selection process effectively starts in the breeder's yard where he/she makes use of one or several broodmares. Although the element of luck is also inherent in breeding, it is safe to say that the better the broodmare's lineage and qualities, the better the chances are of breeding a high-quality foal. Partner choice for the mare is also of influence. The idea is that the chosen stallion improves the lesser qualities of the mare he is paired to without compromising her strong points. From a genetic point of view there is a fifty-percent chance the foal is a colt. The first moment to test the colt foal's potential is at the foal inspection. A first premium is a nice bonus but no more than that. Top priority is to make sure the foal grows up healthy and in a social context. Colt foals should be raised in a herd with other colts and have access to good-quality grazing. Proper management of young stock is key.

First Viewing

The stallion selection course is a strict selection process which comprises a number of stages and serves to realise the KFPS breeding goal. The first stage is called the First Viewing which takes place in Drachten in early December. To take part, Foal Book stallions must be two years old before July the 1st of the year in which the First Viewing takes place. For this first round the horses have to be presented in hand on a purpose-made street. Then the Stallion Inspection Jury assesses breeding type, conformation and legwork (exterior) and correctness of movement in walk and trot. Next is free movement in the cage. In the cage the horses are assessed during free movement in trot and

canter. The young stallions are as much as possible bunched together in groups of the same sire. This helps to give the Jury and the audience an idea of the extent of uniformity of young stallions by one and the same sire. At the end of each day of the First Viewing the Jury announces which Foalbook stallions are through to the Second Viewing. These stallions are declared Star, under the restriction that they are 1.58m as a 3-year old and 1.60m as a 4-year old stallion.

Second Viewing

Statistics over the last five inspection years tell us that on average 27% of stallions from the First Viewing are referred to the Second Viewing. This takes place during

PILOT IN SECOND VIEWING

The decision was taken to run a pilot for the stallion selection 2020. For the stallions who have qualified for the Second Viewing this means that they will be presented in hand and not as is the tradition until 2019, in the cage. The pilot should make it possible to select a larger number of stallions for the instruction days preceding the Central Examination. That way the instruction days will carry more weight in terms of a selection moment because during these days the horses will be assessed under saddle. The pilot leaves room for owners to present their stallion to the Jury in front of the carriage. The underlying concept is that assessment under saddle yields more accurate information than the in-hand presentation or free movement in the cage.

the three-day Stallion Inspection in Leeuwarden in January. Before a referred stallion can actually take part he first has to meet the standards for X-ray testing. Although the quality of semen is not decisive for taking part it has to be examined prior to this second phase and results must have been reported to the KFPS. For taking part in the Central Examination later in the year the semen quality must have been tested before May the 15th and prove to be of the required standard. In addition, the (additional) findings of the radiographic examination, descent and size are also taken into account.

Third Viewing

Up to and including the Stallion Inspection in 2019, the Third Viewing also belonged to the selection procedure of the young stallions. This Third Viewing was organized during the Stallion Inspection in Leeuwarden. The young stallions were again assessed at the in-hand presentation. In 2020, the Third Viewing was canceled as a pilot (see box). Instead from then the young stallions will present themselves under saddle or harnessed a few months later during the instruction days. With that, those instruction days have also become a selection moment for the young stallions. It becomes of course really exciting in this phase, because the select group that remains after this round may eventually report to the Central Investigation.

Second chances and re-inspections

To avoid losing potential stud stallions for the Studbook there is the possibility of a second chance. Stallions who were entered for a re-inspection after the First Viewing and there get a referral, can progress to the Second Viewing. Stallions who have at minimum taken part in the First Viewing but were not selected

for the Central Examination (CE) are given the opportunity of a second chance in the summer before the start of the CE. This second chance consists of an under-saddle or driven presentation, an in-hand assessment of exterior and a veterinary examination. Via this route the stallions have another chance to qualify for the Central Examination.

Instruction days

In the run-up to the Central Examination, which starts in September and lasts 70 days, the KFPS organises three mandatory instruction days. The aim of these days is to give the stallions the best-possible preparation for the CE. During these instruction days the stallions will be presented under saddle by their regular trainers who will be given further training instructions. The instruction days do not have the character of assessments, but the Stallion Inspection Jury will consider whether it is advisable or not to enter the stallion for the Central Examination, or give the advice to return a year later.

Central Examination

The Central Examination, also known as the Performance Test, is the 70-day final stage of the stallion selection course which all in all lasts a whole year. On arrival at the Hippisch Centrum in Exloo (Equestrian Centre, ed.) the stallions are again assessed on exterior and subjected to clinical vetting. To get a clear picture of each stallion's basic ability they are presented under saddle. During the Central Examination the horses receive further training and a report of their personalities and stable manners is drawn up. The test consists of two phases. In the first six weeks the emphasis is on training and under-saddle assessment which is concluded with a final test. The



PHOTO: MAREN SEVINK

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PHOTO: REMCO VEURINK



*The better the broodmare's
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On average 25% of stallions participating in the CE manage to secure the much-coveted stud license



PHOTOS: DIGISHOTS

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same happens in the next four weeks but this time in the driven disciplines driving and showdriving. All results together are collected in an assessment report which includes the scores for aptitude as a riding-, driving- or showdriving horse. The figures over the past five years show that on average 25% of stallions participating in the CE manage to secure the much-coveted stud license.

Strict selection

In the past five years the number of new-born foals registered with the KFPS averaged 3,000 per year. Following the rules of genetics, half of these foals are colts: 1,500. From these, at a minimum age of two, an average of 262 (17%) are entered for the First Viewing every year. On average only 6 of these stallions reach stud stallion status. Which boils down to just 0,4% of all annually registered colt foals stand a chance of reaching this high status of stud stallion. Why stallion selection procedures are so rigorous is mainly down to the fact that stud stallions have a much greater influence on the population than mares. An average stallion can easily produce a few hundred offspring and some top stallions even exceed the 2,000 mark. The 19-year-old Preferent Beart 411 for instance has so

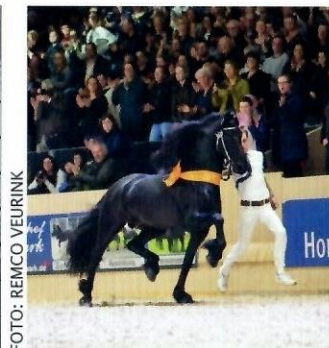
SHORT TEST:

Stallions with a minimum age of seven and with exceptional results in any of the sport disciplines have the option to qualify for stud approval by way of the so-called Short Test. For example, a stallion who has achieved a minimum of three 60% scores in Prix St. Georges dressage can apply for admission to the Short Test. So this Sport stallion does not have to take part in the Central Examination, but will still be assessed on the same aspects as the stallions that follow the long programme. Furthermore, these stallions will also be evaluated on sport aptitude by the Jury.

far sired more than 2,200 registered offspring. Any approved stallion can therefore leave a huge mark on breeding and that calls for a strict selection process. A selection which answers the KFPS breeding goal: a functional and harmoniously-built utility horse, possessing all Friesian breed characteristics, that is healthy and vital and has the aptitude to perform in the sport.

Year	First Viewing	Second Viewing	Third Viewing	Central Examination	Registered as Studbook stallion
2013	261	65	30	20	8
2014	252	58	22	18	3
2015	250	76	38	29	8
2016	223	61	33	28	6
2017	279	82	35	24	4
2018	308	81	35	25	6
2019	265	99	48	24	6
Gemiddelden	263	75 (29%)	34 (45%)	24 (77%)	6 (25%)

Stallion selection in figures (period 2013–2019)



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PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK



Reproduction

TEXT: AGEETH VAN DER LEE
VETERINARIAN GERRIT KAMPMAN

Healthy foals with AI and ET

Stallion keepers with Friesian Studbook stallions use artificial insemination to impregnate mares with their stallions' semen. That is a safer option for both stallion and mare and this way more mares can be inseminated, including mares in foreign countries. For genetically interesting mares who cannot carry their foals themselves for any practical reasons, embryo transfer is the alternative.

Artificial insemination (AI)

It is not even that long ago that stallion keepers used to transport their stallions to the mares to cover them on location. Nowadays all stallion keepers with Friesian Studbook stallions work on the basis of AI, artificial insemination. AI means that the stallion's semen is artificially injected into the mare. The stallion covers a phantom, an artificial mare, and the semen is collected in an artificial vulva. Next, the semen is diluted at the stallion station and distributed over multiple tubes. Hence, multiple mares can be inseminated with the semen from one ejaculate. If necessary, the semen can be frozen for transporting abroad. Frozen semen loses its fertility after 12-20 hours; fresh semen can be preserved for a longer period, up to 36-48 hours after collection.

Fertile period

The semen is injected into the uterus with a pipette. Chances of insemination are highest when the semen is injected as close as possible to the ovulation. With the

help of an ultrasound the veterinarian can scan the uterus and ovaries. Usually the mare has already given off signs of being on heat, which refers to those couple of days during her three-to-four-week cycle when she is fertile. During these days the ovaries produce a follicle. Mares who are in season (on heat) often urinate and are interested in the teaser stallion. The teaser stallion does not cover the mare but is only taken to the mare to check if she is in season.

With the ultrasound the veterinarian scans the mare to estimate the size of the follicle on the ovaries. This enables the vet to determine the approximate time of ovulation. The relation between the size of the follicle and the moment of ovulation slightly differs in Friesian mares as compared to Warmbloods. With Friesian horses the follicle usually continues to grow a little longer than in Warmbloods. By establishing the expected moment of ovulation the vet can advise when the mare has to be inseminated. Then the mare owner can get in touch with the stallion keeper to order a semen sample from the stallion of his/her choice.

Reserving stud services

In case of young, newly-approved Friesian stallions the advice is to reserve a stud service at an early stage because these stallions have a stud limit of 180 mares. Most stallion keepers visit the mare owner's yard to carry out the insemination. Two days after the insemination the veterinarian scans the mare again to check if the ovulation has in effect taken place. If this is not the case the mare has to be inseminated another time because by now the injected semen has lost its fertility. It is possible to bring the ovulation forward by injecting hormones. If the follicle has 'disappeared', meaning it is no longer on the ovary, then you have to wait a while to find out if the impregnation has been successful. After about sixteen to eighteen days the mare can be scanned for pregnancy. In some cases the pregnancy will be aborted within six weeks, this is called early embryonic death. Best practice therefore is to scan the mare one more time for pregnancy after six weeks. Most stallion keepers offer a 'non-gestation provision' or 'live foal guarantee' for mares who are not pregnant on the 1st of October, which signifies the end of the breeding season. Is your mare still in foal? Congratulations! The countdown to the birth of a Friesian foal can begin!

Embryo Transfer (ET)

It looks odd but is no longer so uncommon: a Friesian foal seen at inspections at the side of a surrogate dam from a totally different breed. In most cases the foal's biological dam is a high-quality mare who is genetically interesting for breeding but cannot carry the foal herself, for example because she competes at high levels in the sport. Being a broodmare is equivalent to top sports and is physically far too taxing to combine with a career in higher dressage. The solution is Embryo Transfer (ET). When ET is used, an embryo

from a donor mare, the biological dam, is transferred to a recipient (surrogate) mare who carries the foal to term. For ET to be successful it is key that both donor mare and recipient mare are healthy and fertile.

Donor mares and surrogate mares

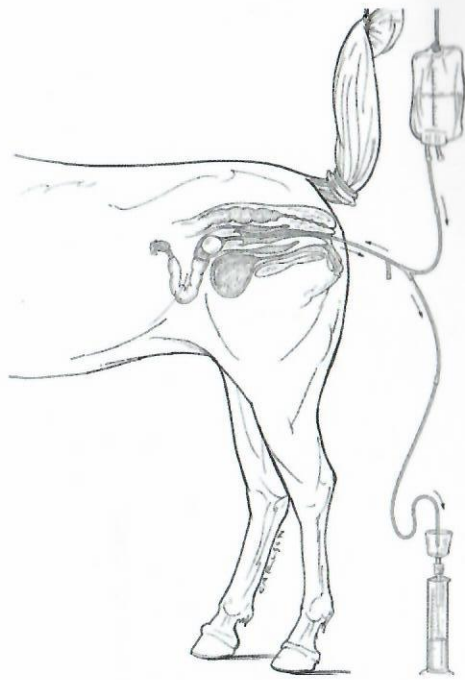
The impregnation takes place in the donor mare. The veterinarian will try to determine the moment of ovulation as accurately as possible, which requires frequent scanning of the mare. After insemination and impregnation the embryo is flushed from the uterus after about one week. ET can only be successful if the recipient mare's cycle matches the donor mare's cycle, so this is essential. In order to choose the most suitable surrogate mare, i.e. the mare whose cycle is closest to the donor mare's cycle, specialised clinics have several surrogate mares available and at hand. Following a successful ET the breeder can take the surrogate mare home. After weaning of the foal the surrogate mare returns to the clinic. With an eye on the costs involved it is an attractive option to arrange a surrogate mare by yourself. Mares that are no longer suitable for the sport due to an injury can be launched into a second career as surrogate mares.

The veterinarian transfers the flushed-out embryo into the surrogate mare. After about four to five days the embryo shows up on the scan and the success of the ET can be confirmed with certainty. When all preconditions are met the chances of success for ET are considerable: 75 to 80% of transferred embryos catch on.

OPU/ICSI

In addition to ET, another option to get offspring out of a mare is Ovum Pick Up (OPU) in combination with intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI). With this technique follicles are recovered from the mare and impregnated in a laboratory.





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PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK



PHOTO: REMCO VEURINK

The relation between the size of the follicle and the moment of ovulation slightly differs in Friesian mares as compared to Warmbloods



PHOTO: CHRISTA MERK

Helping with stallion choices: please use the available tools

TEXT: JANNA KROES

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After checking all websites, following courses, heated discussions, visiting inspections, devouring articles and books, reality catches up with you. The moment has come to choose a stallion for your mare. Not an easy feat. Luckily, there are tools that can help you make the best stallion choices.

Breeding a top horse

Even experienced and seasoned breeders often spend all winter months brooding over it before making their final decision. Or maybe the other one...? Again, the final decision is not so final anymore. Quite often the definitive decision is delayed until the moment when the mare has to be inseminated. This is not at all uncommon, which probably offers some consolation to novice breeders. We ponder, discuss, consult, complete the data base and consider the options at length. Choosing the right stallion is a complicated affair, because, when is it good enough? Breeding the best horse..., doesn't every breeder dream of breeding a stud stallion or Model mare? Fortunately, there are many tools at your disposal. The expression 'breeding is anybody's guess' is far less true than commonly accepted. What is important though, is to use all available tools and to learn how to rate characteristics at their true value. For many breeders, choosing the stallion they fancy is based on feeling. Sure, that is definitely important. And anyway, there is no accounting for taste. Whereas one person may adore horses with a more classic build, others may prefer elegant and classy types. In all cases the aim is to breed a foal that answers the KFPS breeding goal, is at minimum Star worthy, but also has all the functionalities needed for a durable and enjoyable life span.

Step by step

It all begins at home. The first task is to make an

objective and comprehensive picture of your own mare. Put down those rose-coloured glasses and adopt a critical attitude to observe your horse, preferably together with an experienced breeder. Get hold of the linear score form and mark any weak points. How did previous foals by this mare turn out? All data in relation to a mare can be looked up via the KFPS site www.kfps.nl under Myhorse, including the linear score form, pedigree and breeding values.

Study the weak points in detail: are they representative for this mare line? How do the dam, brothers, sisters and granddam measure up in this area? And then there is the sire's side: does the stallion have the same characteristics?

If that is the case then this characteristic definitely has to be the decisive factor. After all, this is a negative aspect and it is not a coincidence that your mare has it too. If for instance, too much slope in the croup is embedded in your horse's pedigree, then that is a near guarantee this characteristic will be present in future offspring. And bear in mind how experienced breeders tend to complain: 'It comes faster than it goes.'

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*The expression
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Exploring resources

Information and opinions are plentiful. Fortunately, throughout the years a wealth of information about breeding has been recorded via the site, Phryso Magazine and books. Data from tests, performance testing of stallions, breeding results of sires, mare tests and articles on crown jewels and all pedigrees are available. Study the books *Friese Stamhengsten en Merriestammen* (Friesian Foundation Stallions and Mare Pedigrees, ed.). Visit the KFPS site, attend inspections and watch aptitude tests and sport competitions. Obviously, members in foreign countries do not have the benefit of being so close to the action. So do not hesitate to ask! Most experienced breeders and stallion keepers are more than willing to share their expertise and experience. If distance is the problem then make a phone call or use email. Joining a breeding chapter and study club brings advantages such as sharing knowledge and knowhow. Interesting discussion evenings organised by various bodies are worth visiting. The Friday of the Stallion Inspection traditionally offers a clinic programme brimming with educational workshops.

Data base selection

Back tot the mare. Select one or two, but no more than three characteristics you wish to improve. Limiting the number of points on your wish list generates more efficiency. Go to the KFPS site and under the tab Breeding click on Stallion Information. By clicking the button advanced search you get access to the data base. Here you can enter your minimum and maximum values. Say, you want to focus on the walk because your mare scores a five on walk and the other members of the family also lack quality of the walk. Then enter a higher (>) value of for instance 107 for the characteristic 'walk'. Next, the data base produces only those stallions that meet this criterion, which is stallions with a breeding value of 107 or higher for the walk.

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The higher the value the better, although there is a chance that the data base will come up with few or no stallions. If you wish to select on more characteristics then also enter these details. Then take stock of your mare's positive aspects. If your mare has a gorgeous head and you do not want to make any concessions here, then enter the value of your choice here too, in this case not lower than for example 102. If beautiful heads are strongly embedded in the dam line you could consider taking a slight risk with regard to this aspect. Just imagine for instance, that the stallion with the best hereditary profile for the walk does not have a terribly beautiful head? Combined with your mare this is probably an acceptable risk. But always take the reliability of the breeding values into account.

Reliability

If the reliability is below 40% then you have to make use of your own antennae and go further afield to obtain information from others. Or click through to the parents of your intended match to find out what characteristics they pass on to their offspring. Study in detail all stallions on the result list.

Are you looking for a stallion? Enter the name of the stallion on the search bar of the site, then click on the tab Stud stallions and this too gives you access to all information regarding this stallion. Here you can also find information about the stallion's dam and granddam. Also click on the button Stallion information under the menu Breeding and do not forget to check the Library, which you can find under the tab The Friesian Horse. Here you find many educational articles on breeding, performance tests and mare lines.

Factors to take into account

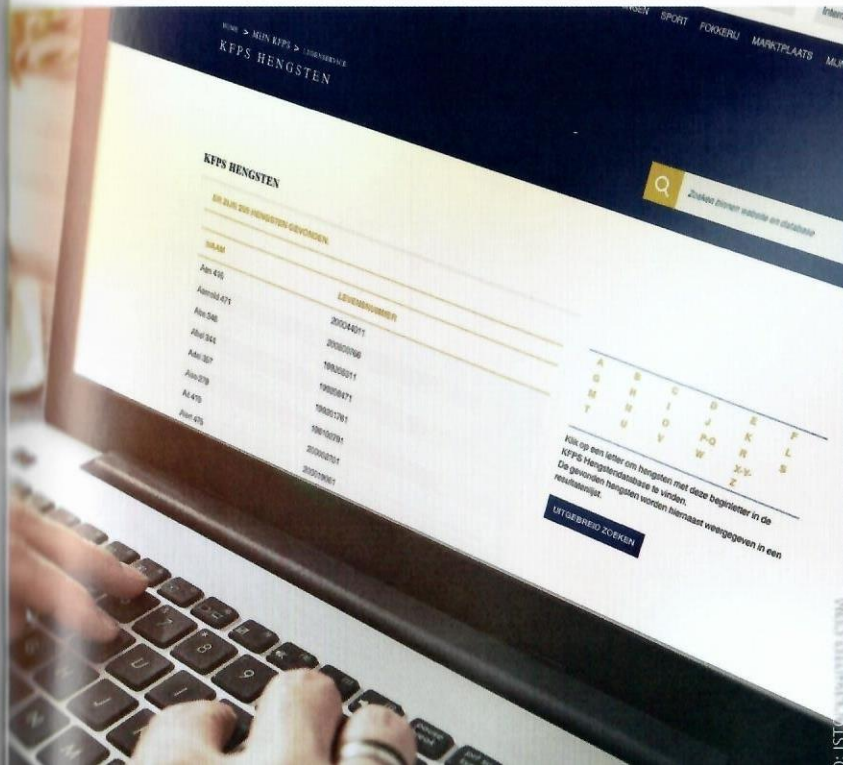
Factors like carrier status of the dwarfism and hydrocephaly genes have to be taken into account for your stallion choice. So your mare must be tested. If you



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PHOTO: CALLY MATHERLY



Make sure you have prior knowledge about carrier status before you breed: so have your mare tested!

A dark brown foal is captured in a dynamic running pose across a lush green field. The foal's body is angled towards the left, with its front legs extended forward and its hind legs pushing off. The field is filled with tall green grass and scattered white daisies. In the background, a line of trees and a white fence are visible under a bright sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of energy and natural beauty.

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have not done this yet, tests for carrier status can be ordered on the KFPS site. This is a straightforward and cost-effective procedure. Breeding without this prior knowledge is strongly discouraged because there are too many risks involved. Other factors to consider are the inbreeding percentage and, though to a lesser degree, the kinship percentage. Inbreeding percentages of 5% or more within the first five generations are usually discouraged in order to prevent hereditary disorders.

Inbreeding calculations

The term kinship percentage is a difficult concept. This percentage indicates the degree of kinship of one individual with the rest of the population. The lower, the better within the context of animal health. The desired percentage is 17,5% or lower. Obviously, the fewer relatives on your horse's paper the better that is with regard to inbreeding. This is however, not an indication of quality. Kinship is not an aim in itself! In the past, some stallions were rejected on the basis of their offspring and they have a low kinship because they were no longer used so much. Sometimes stallions begin with a low kinship but suddenly they are in great demand and then their kinship level rises. To calculate these percentages you have to go to the tool which you can find under the tab MyHorse. Here you select the mare in question and next click on inbreeding calculation. In this portal you can 'tick' any random stallion

and then the data base presents the future inbreeding- and kinship percentages as well as the expected breeding values.

Last advice

A few last words of advice: No matter how friendly the stallion keeper is, this is not at all relevant! Your concern is choosing the best stallion! This is about your money and your foal. No one is keen on a low-quality foal, not even that nice stallion keeper. Neither is there a guarantee your foal will become champion of the Stallion Inspection. At inspections it is the form of the day that dictates the selection. All stallions in the ring are excellent quality because they are all KFPS Studbook stallions. They meet the highest criteria for quality but during this show the adrenalin and commotion influence the outcome too. That is not a guarantee this stallion is going to improve your mare's weak points. The best possible chance of breeding your own champion fully depends on a thorough examination of facts, expectations, aim, character and yes, also breeder instincts! And as is the case in so many domains, instincts develop on the basis of knowledge and experience. So just do it. Because nothing is more heart-warming than witnessing your own black pearl giving birth to a foal in the middle of the night. It is so precious and touching to see a new-born foal take its first steps in the early spring grass. 



STALLION INFORMATION

Every year the KFPS publishes the Stallion information with data about all active Friesian Studbook stallions and their breeding values. This attachment is distributed together with the March issue of Phryso. Under the menu 'breeding' the KFPS website offers a host of data and you can also check out the Library under the menu 'the Friesian horse' for still more information. Here you can find the stallion reports, Stallion Inspection reports and background information about breeding, sport, welfare and veterinary issues relevant for the Friesian breed.



PHOTO: INGRID TRUIJENS

Birth of a foal: preparation, a calm environment and the role of Mother Nature

TEXT: AGEETH VAN DER LEE
VETERINARIAN GERRIT KAMPMAN

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The birth of a foal is a special and exciting moment. In the absolute majority of cases the period of gestation and the arrival of the foal will go smoothly and without problems. And what could possibly beat the sight of a Friesian foal frolicking in the field?

A successful pregnancy begins with a fit mare. Mares in good physical condition are in a much better position to deal with the foaling process. Even in advanced pregnancy mares can still be used for sport and recreation. Only when the mare starts to struggle because of her growing belly and shows signs of discomfort in active work, the time has come to give her rest in the field.

How to prepare for foaling

In the weeks prior to the foal's birth the sensible thing to do is to give the mare an influenza and tetanus vaccination. If foaling is to take place in a stable then the mare must be moved there well in advance so that her body can develop antibodies to the germs that are potentially present in the stable. These antibodies are passed on to the foal through the beestings so that the foal is also protected. It is also fine to leave the mare in the field for foaling. In that case a small area of the field should be fenced off to make it easier to check on the mare during the night. To provide the mare with sufficient vitamins and minerals she can be given a ration of basic hard feed. But the most important ingredient of her diet is good-quality forage or fibre. When the mare's lactation is going smoothly but there is as yet not enough grazing in the field, best advice is to supplement the mare's diet with special mare cubes.

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Signs of approaching birth

Foals are usually born after a gestation period of around eleven months, say, roughly 330 days. The unborn foal is fully-developed and 'ready' to be born from two weeks before the due date. Sometimes a mare can overshoot the due date by three to four weeks and still give birth to a healthy foal. The first sign that foaling is about to happen soon is when the mare is bagging up because milk production is getting underway and she starts 'waxing up', which means a build-up of wax-like droplets can be seen on the teats of the udder. Sometimes mares become restless. Most mares give birth at night when it is quiet and they are not disturbed. There are countless tales of breeders who stay close to their mare to keep an eye on her, only to find the new-born foal behind the mare after a mere 10-minute absence because of a toilet run. To prevent the loss of too much sleep, the mare can be fitted with a foaling alarm which is triggered when the mare lies down. Another option is to mount a camera in the stable, but this still requires the use of an alarm-clock for regular checks.

The birthing process

Once the foaling process gets underway the mare should be disturbed as little as possible. She can basically go through this process all by herself, it is Nature's way. First the uterus will start contracting and the cervix starts to dilate. In this phase the foal must rotate. During pregnancy the foal was lying on its back but for the birth it must be lying on its belly. When the mare is passing fluid at this stage this means the waters have broken. The allantois in the birth canal has burst and amniotic fluid seeps away. When there are no complications the foal will be born within about twenty

minutes. First to appear are the feet of the forelegs with the head on top. Now the membrane enclosing the foal can be opened so that the foal can start breathing. The rest of the foal will now slip out quickly. The foal is however, still connected to the mare with the umbilical cord, which ruptures as soon as the mare gets to her feet. When the mare is well into the pushing stage but there is no progress in foaling then a veterinarian must be called in.

The 1-2-3- rule

Breeders are well-advised to remember the 1-2-3 rule when a foal is born. One hour after birth the foal must be on its feet, two hours after birth it must be drinking and after three hours the afterbirth (placenta) must be expelled. This is the natural order of things: a strong foal quickly gets on its feet, a smart foal quickly starts suckling. When the foal starts suckling then the mare starts to produce the hormone oxytocin which helps to activate her milk production. This hormone also stimulates contraction of the uterus to drive out the afterbirth.

Afterbirth after three hours

With Friesian horses it is relatively more common for a mare to retain the placenta, meaning that the afterbirth, the placenta, sticks to the uterine wall. When the afterbirth has not been pushed out after three hours a veterinarian must be consulted. In case it takes too long before the placenta is pushed out then it must be removed by a veterinarian in order to avoid serious complications such as laminitis. The veterinarian can use several methods to ease away a retained placenta. A rather new method is by filling the large arteries connected to the umbilical cord with water so that the afterbirth becomes detached from the uterine wall. This method has proven very successful and has the

extra advantage that there is no need for the vet to feel up the uterus with his hands, so no germs can be transmitted. Moreover, there is a better chance the placenta will come away in one piece. It is crucial to check if the afterbirth is complete after it has been expelled. Occasionally the placenta has ruptured and bits of it have stayed in the uterus. This can increase the risk of blood poisoning and hence, cause laminitis.

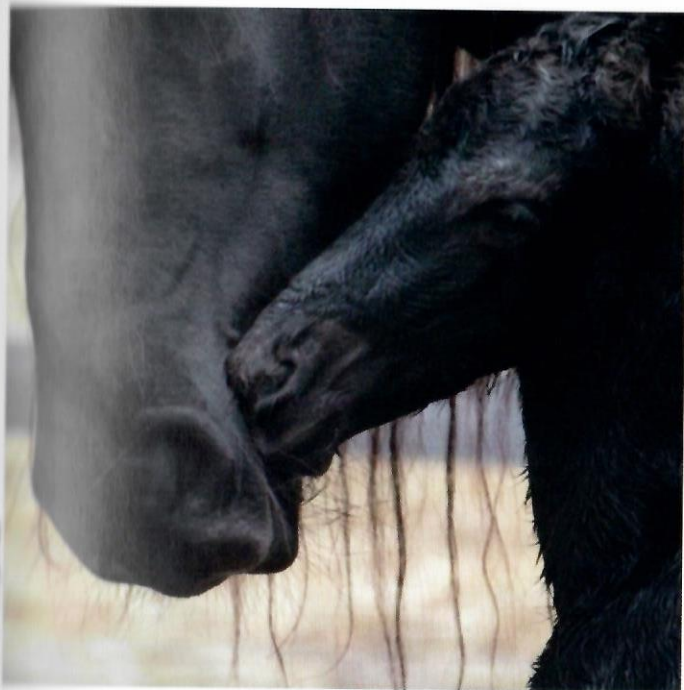
Beestings are vitally important

The first milk produced after birth is the colostrum and for new-born foals it is key to ingest sufficient amounts of this colostrum, the so-called beestings. It has a thicker substance and a more yellowy colour than normal milk and contains many antibodies. Foals are born without antibodies so ingesting these via the beestings is really important. A healthy foal will soon try to get to its feet, within one hour, and instinctively starts looking for the udder. Because the udder is now overfilling with milk this creates pressure on the udder and the foal's first suckling can be a bit painful for the mare. It is therefore good practice to monitor the production of colostrum by milking the mare beforehand. This helps to ease pressure on the udder and makes suckling easier for the foal.

Observing and monitoring

The first bowel motions by the foal, called the meconium, will appear after about two hours and can cause a bit of abdominal cramps. It may be useful to call in a veterinarian on the first day following the birth. He or she can give both foal and mare a check-up and give some advice about things like feeding and de-worming programmes for mare and foal. Make sure to observe mare and foal carefully during those first days. And above all, do not forget to enjoy this wonderful new life in the field.





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PHOTO: TESSA DE VRIES



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PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK

Care

TEXT: AGEETH VAN DER LEE
VETERINARIAN GERRIT KAMPMAN

Raising young Friesian horses: time for exercising and socialising

During their first few months foals stay with their mums in the field. After about four to six months a foal can be weaned from its dam. To allow it to develop into a healthy, balanced horse a youngster must grow up with other individuals of its species and be given lots of exercise until the age of three.

Contact with humans as early as possible

Foals learn from their dams how to interact with other horses but during their lives they will also spend much time around humans, so foals must get used to people from an early age. Walking on a lead rope, lifting its feet, being tied up and things like grooming can all be introduced and practised in a playful way with the devoted mum at its side. In the first months of its life, the foal will become increasingly more independent of its dam and seek out the contact with other members in the herd.

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Weaning

After about four to six months it is possible to start separating the foal from its dam, the weaning process. To prevent udder infections in the mare the weaning should be done gradually, for example by separating the foal from the dam just for the night. This could be done by putting the foal in a stable next to the dam's.

To make sure the foal does not lose too much condition when it is weaned, it is a good idea to supplement its diet with a foal mix. This helps to safeguard a sufficient intake of vitamins, minerals and essential amino acids.

Life lessons from the dam

It is the dam who teaches the foal the first crucial life lessons. She will set him straight when he misbehaves. This is an essential stage in a foal's life that cannot be taken over by people. For foals who lose their dams at a terribly young age and who are handreared and bottlefed by humans, it is absolutely vital to be in contact with a foster dam to learn the horse language. Young horses that failed to get these first instructive lessons are much more likely to develop behavioural problems later in life. Sometimes they have lost their respect for humans which can provoke dangerous situations. Life in a herd can be problematic for hand-reared horses because they have not learned how to read the behaviour of their kind and how to react to it.

Growing up in a herd

After weaning the foal can be placed in a herd. Not all breeders have the facilities to keep a youngster at home until the age of three. For a good development, a young horse needs lots of free exercise and contact with other horses. Exercise is important for the development of bone, tendons and muscle (see



background). And there is another fundamental reason why young horses should be kept in herds. Horses are social animals and their wellbeing depends on the contact with other horses.

Good quality roughage

In summer, the herds of young stock are turned out in the field with roundtheclock grazing. It is selfevident that clean drinking water must be available at all times. When the animals are housed in runin sheds in winter it is important to give them access to goodquality roughage, day and night. Also make sure that those horses that are lower in hierarchy get their fair share of hay. The quality of the forage can be established by carrying out an analysis of the haylage or roughage. This analysis will give a clear picture of the energy

*Exercise is important
for the development
of bone, tendons
and muscle*

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levels and minerals present in the fibre. To help supplement possible shortages the horses can be fed a complementary and made-to-order compound feed.

Specialised foalraising yards

For the first few years of their lives, young stock can go to yards that have specialised in raising youngsters. In summer they live in herds in the field, in winter they are housed in run-in sheds, preferably with access to an outdoor paddock. At most foalraising yards the horses live in groups of the same age and sex. The herd life teaches them how to interact with each other and they have ample space to play and frolic. Daily supervision is a must to oversee and take care of the animals in case of illness or injuries. Young horses need regular visits from the farrier for trimming of the feet. And frequent checks by a veterinarian are good common sense too. The vet will take care of deworming and the necessary vaccinations.



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PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK

BACKGROUND OC(D)

Osteochondrosis is a disorder in the development of cartilage in a joint. When a young horse goes through a period of rapid growth this may cause a defect in the structure of cartilage and sometimes a bit of cartilage can even die off. Dead pieces of cartilage emerge as loose bits in the joint. Osteochondrosis (OC) develops at a very young age, somewhere between one and eight months old. It is a dynamic process and many foals heal naturally because the loose pieces of cartilage are absorbed and the OC disappears. If not, then the loose pieces may ossify and cause problems in the joint (OCD) later in life. Fragments in the knee joint are more likely to be absorbed but this is less likely with loose bits in the hock joint. This is the reason why, when horses are older, it is mostly the hock joint which is affected by OCD.

Exercise is vital

OCD is usually not easy to detect from the outside, it can only be diagnosed by a veterinarian after taking X-rays. Loose bits of cartilage can be removed by arthroscopic surgery, which is a relatively simple procedure. By making very small incisions the veterinarian can look into the joint with the help of a tiny camera. All it needs is another tiny incision to remove the loose fragments. The prognosis for full recovery partly depends on the type of joint where the OCD was found. The best protection against OCD is to give foals and young stock ample opportunities to roam and exercise. Exercise at a very young age is absolutely essential for the development of cartilage and to toughen ligaments and tendons.



Nutrition: the basis is good-quality roughage

TEXT: MARJE STOMPS

Like any other horse Friesians thrive on a diet which has fibre as the main ingredient. Roughage must be of good quality and if necessary can be supplemented with vitamins, minerals and a compound hard feed. There are a few rules to observe for feeding Friesian horses.

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The 'bite - step' feeding principle

In the wild, horses roam great distances every day and keep eating little bits while on the move. This is called the 'bite - step' feeding principle, and it is a far cry from our presentday way of feeding Friesian horses. We have changed their diets from more or less continuous grazing to two or three feeds a day. Now since the digestive system of our domesticated (Friesian) horse has, in essence, not changed it is important to make sure their eating habits remain as close as possible to how they used to forage in the wild. In a practical sense it is not feasible to return entirely to the bite - step feeding principle, but there are a few aspects we can consider to meet the biological needs of our Friesian horses when it comes to feeding.

Better digestion with roughage

First and foremost, roughage (grass, hay, silage/ haylage) must always form the basis of the horse's feeding programme. Roughage is by nature the best source of nutrients for a horse. It contains lots of fibre which stimulates bowel movement and the required amount of chewing is part of the horse's natural behaviour. Chewing produces saliva which is needed to digest the food in the horse's gut and also provides a natural buffer against ulcers. This explains why it is so important for horses to have sufficient access to roughage. A good guideline to observe is that horses should never be without food for longer than six to eight hours. How much roughage a horse needs depends on the individual horse and the quality of the fibre. Some people would say that horses need unrestricted access to roughage. This is not always possible and moreover, there is also the fact to consider that Friesian horses are a thrifty breed, so-called good doers. That makes them more susceptible to becoming overweight because of too much protein or starch in the food. Other possibly

foodrelated conditions common in Friesian horses are sweet itch and mud fever.

Factoring in pasture time

A rule of thumb for feeding fibre is about 1.5 kg per 100 kg of body weight per day. The quality of the type of fibre also plays a part. Fibre should never contain mould and dust or be smelly. To determine the exact ingredients of your roughage it is possible to carry out a hay- or silage analysis. This will tell you which and how many nutrients the fibre contains as well as the mineral content present in the fibre. If required you can supplement the diet with vitamins and minerals to compensate for potential shortages.

When calculating the amount of roughage, time spent in the field must always be factored in. A Friesian horse in a pasture with sufficient grass will ingest about 4 to 5 kilos of fresh grass per hour. This amount should be deducted from the fibre rations. It is not a good idea to put a horse in a field full of lush grass from one day to the next, this should be introduced gradually. There are certain periods of time during the day and year when the grass contains lots of sugar and proteins, which can bring on colic and other nasty ailments.

Always remember though, that stabled horses cannot be without fibre for lengthy periods, so make sure the horse always has something left to nibble on to see it through the night.

Pastured horses need deworming

Turning horses out in the field means they are exposed to worm contaminations. Worms are parasites that, also in healthy horses, live in the digestive tract. The worm eggs leave the horse's body with the droppings. During grazing the larvae of these eggs will be ingested again by another horse. The presence of too many worms poses a health risk for horses. Especially young stock, foals too, are susceptible to worm infestations.



*Especially young stock,
including foals, are
susceptible to worm
infestations*

The symptoms are a dull coat, stunted growth, weight loss, colic or diarrhoea.

As worms inflict damage on the intestines, worm infestations should definitely be prevented as much as possible and the best protection is good field management. Pastured horses should regularly be relocated to clean plots, droppings must be removed from the field, you can mow the field or bring in other livestock for grazing. Analysis of the droppings, the so-called faecal worm egg counts (FWEC), can reveal the

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extent of the worm infestation. Worms come in many types and sizes, such as foal worms, roundworm (ascarids) and redworm (strongyles). However, not all worms show up in the analysis, so deworming is the key word. Deworming agents have to be administered orally but dosages are dependent on the weight and age of the individual horse. Not all dewormers are suitable for foals. Best practice is to ask the veterinarian for advice.

Hard feeds as required

A Friesian horse in light work, or less, and who does not have any specific needs such as pregnant or nursing mares, generally does well on just roughage of the appropriate quality and possibly a vitamin- and mineral supplement. If the horse is in training, is being prepared for the inspection or needs to perform in the sport then it is recommended to add a hard feed, such as a compound feed or muesli. We advise to do the same for pregnant and nursing mares who need extra energy for (nursing) the foal.

Small rations of hard feed

There are all sorts of different hard feeds, for instance maintenance cubes for horses in light work, a special stud mix for mares or a highenergy feed for horses that have to perform at top levels. A guideline for horses in normal work would be 0.5 to 1.5 kilos a day. For horses in heavy work and training this can increase to several kilos per day. Hard feeds have to be fed in small rations, preferably not more than 1 kilo at a time. The horse has a small stomach which cannot process large portions of food. What works well is to start with a meal of roughage and give the hard feed afterwards. The horse has to work hard at chewing the fibre and that produces saliva which in turn helps to digest the hard feeds and serves to prevent stomach problems.



PHOTO: ANTOINETTE SCHRAUWEN



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FEEDING GUIDELINES

- The basis of the diet is good-quality roughage
- Feed several times a day so that the horse is never without food for longer than six hours
- A horse roughly needs 1.5 kilos of fibre per 100 kilos of body weight
- Start with fibre rations and then (if necessary) the hard feed, this is more beneficial for the horse's health
- Always introduce dietary changes gradually, for example at the start and at the end of the grazing season
- An unsuitable feeding regime can lead to weight problems, health problems and stable vices
- Make sure that good-quality drinking water is available at all times





PHOTO: MARK MULWIJK

Accommodation: safe stable, equine company and free movement

TEXT: MARIJE STOMPS

Keeping a Friesian horse may seem pretty straightforward, but there is more to it than you might think. First there is the accommodation to consider. Stables and fields or paddocks must be a safe place for the horse and gradually the focus has shifted more to the horse's need for natural behaviour in its living environment. Part of that is the contact with other horses and ample free movement.

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Individually or in a group

There are several options for housing Friesian horses. The most common way is to keep horses in individual stables and to provide periods of free movement in the field or paddock every day. Another option is group housing, which is a popular way for raising young Friesian horses. Young stock are then grouped together in herds in stables or in the field. Also becoming increasingly popular are housing systems which offer 24/7 free movement, such as a Paddock Paradise. This method of keeping horses closely resembles how horses live in the wild: they are free to choose to go to different places in the field, in the paddocks or can go to the sheltering barn to feed, drink or sleep. In this type of housing horses always live in a group, the same way a herd of feral horses lives in the wild.

Guidelines for good housing

Both individual stabling and group housing with or without 24/7 free movement come with their own advantages and disadvantages. It also rather depends on the owner, the accommodation, the intended use of the horses and a lot of other factors whether or not a specific housing system is suitable. There are however, a few guidelines that give an indication of the minimal requirements for housing equines. In the Netherlands these are laid down in the Gids Goede Praktijken 2.0 (Guide for Good Practice, ed.) a manual for horse owners by the Equine Sector Council to improve equine welfare.

The ideal stable

Horses that live in individual stables need sufficient space to move around. The stable must be spacious enough for them to turn around, lie down and get up easily. Horses taller than 1.56m therefore need a minimum floor space of 10 square metres. For horses

that are smaller the recommended box space is at minimum 2x height at withers squared. For a pony of 1.40m that comes down to $2 \times 1,40 = 2,80 \times 2,80 = 7.84 \text{ m}^2$. Required floor space for heavily-in-foal mares and mares with a foal at their side should be at least 12 m^2 . Stands, the type of stabling where horses are tied up in a narrow space, have been prohibited in the Netherlands since 2017.

Stables must be safe and made of solid materials so that horses cannot contract injuries because of protruding bits and pieces. And do not forget to consider fire safety issues! Stables must also provide sufficient exposure to daylight and good ventilation is key to prevent issues like respiratory problems. Obviously, unlimited access to clean, good quality drinking water is essential and the floor of the stable should preferably be covered with a bedding material suitable for equines, such as straw, shavings or flax. Mucking out and putting in fresh bedding must be done on a regular basis.

For the wellbeing of horses it is important not to have

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ACCOMMODATION CHECK

- Individual stables offer sufficient space: a minimum of 10 m^2 for a Friesian horse
- Stables are made of solid, durable materials, are safe and provided with clean bedding
- The walls are not closed off but instead have a window, hatch or open top half of partitions
- The stable has sufficient ventilation
- The horse is not kept under solitary conditions and every day can see, hear, smell and preferably touch other horses
- In addition to training, the horse is given sufficient free movement on a daily basis

closed walls on all four sides. It is an absolute must to have so-called Dutch doors so that the top half can be left open, or a hatch which opens to the outside or a wall with bars to the next stable, anything that enables the horse to see his surroundings and other horses.

The importance of free movement

In the wild a horse roams free for about sixteen hours a day in its search for food. So it is obvious that it is not a good idea to put horses in stables for days on end. Worse, it is very bad for the horse's mental state and health and can even trigger the horse to develop unpleasant stable vices or become unmanageable. Everyday access to free movement is a must for every horse. It is not so easy to come up with a guideline because every situation is different and not everybody has the same possibilities. Besides, there are also climate and soil conditions to consider. So it is a matter of customising, but the general agreement is that a horse needs at least four hours a day in the field or paddock. The basic rule is: the more the better. Exercise and movement are absolute key ingredients for a horse's health, also for Friesian horses. It is good

*The stable must be
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for the buildup of bone, tendons and muscle, it stimulates blood circulation and the lymphatic system, it improves digestion and the disposal of waste products. Thanks to free exercise the horse stays healthy, fit and happy.

Naturally, the direct environment the horse lives in has to be safe, be that the field, paddock or something like a Paddock Paradise. The fencing must be safe and sound and made of durable materials. Barbed wire is no longer admitted in the Netherlands because it can cause very nasty injuries in horses.

Company of their own species

Nowadays there is a lot more awareness in horse-keeping communities that horses have a strong need for the company of their own kind. Research has revealed that horses, herd creatures by nature, become terribly unhappy when being kept solitary in stables or fields. Keeping just one horse is therefore strongly discouraged. The presence of another equine, even if it is only a Shetland pony, makes a world of difference. It also helps if the horse can hear, see and preferably also touch one or more horses when stabled or kept in a field. This enables the horse to satisfy its natural need for nuzzling and grooming.

It is however, never a good idea to put horses together in a field or group accommodation if they have not had the time to get to know each other first. Horses have their own personalities and therefore not always get along with each other. Or in order to establish their place in the hierarchy are even prepared to fight for it. A much better approach is to introduce horses to each other slowly, for example by putting them in adjacent plots with a fence in between. This is also often done with sport horses and stud stallions so that they can get their daily dose of exercise without the risk of injuring each other, which would of course also have financial consequences.





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PHOTO: RUBEN KARNAAS

Taking care of the coat: beautiful coat, mane and tail: this is how it is done

TEXT: MARIJE STOMPS

Friesian horses are famous for their shiny, jet-black coat colour, rich, long manes and abundant feathers on the legs. Good care is absolutely vital to keep all that hair in good condition. Here is a list with a range of tips and advice.

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How to keep the jetblack coat colour

Friesian horses must be black. Jetblack. Coats can however, turn a slightly brownish colour, for example because the horse has been turned out a lot in sunny weather. When a horse has just been washed or hosed down and is then put outside in direct sunlight the hairs in the coat can 'burn' and become brown. It is better to wait until the horse has dried off before it is exposed to the sun and as a rule, Friesians should not be turned out in the field during the hottest hours of summer days. A fly- or thin summer rug, maybe even a sunreflective rug, can also be a great help. Some Friesian horses are by nature more prone to developing a brownish glow and sad as it is, there is no cure for it. Taking good care of the coat includes frequent grooming so that dirt and grime cannot stick to the hairs. It is therefore a good idea to wash your Friesian – with a skincompatible horse shampoo that leaves the oily coating intact –, or to hose it down on a regular basis. Washing removes all the dust and sand from the coat and you have a clean, fresh and shiny horse again.

Plaits to prevent splitting and breakage

The most eyecatching features of a Friesian horse are undoubtedly those wonderful, long manes and rich tail. Although the mane of most Friesians can grow to an amazing length it is really important to make sure the hairs do not break or split. This is the reason why many Friesians are often seen with plaited manes. The length of time you can leave the mane plaited is different for each individual horse: for some only a day or two, for others the plaits can stay in for up to two weeks. There are different techniques for plaiting. One option is to make a number of normal plaits that hang down in a straight line. When these are fairly long they can be folded back and tied with an elastic band. Some people even cover them with old socks for protection. Another possibility are so-called French braids. This

braid runs from behind the ears backwards along the crest of the mane and gradually more tufts of hair are fed into the braid. If you choose to leave your horse's mane unplaited then it is even more important to keep them clean and to stop them from becoming all tangled up. Very long manes may even get in the way when the horse is feeding, which can be easily solved by plaiting the tufts of mane behind the ears.

Clean manes and tails

To make sure the Friesian horse keeps a lovely thick tail it should not be left to grow too long. If the tail is too long the horse may accidentally step on it with the hind legs and pull out some of the hairs. Best practice therefore is frequent trimming of the tail at the bottom. A good rule of thumb for its length would be just above the fetlock. A slightly shorter tail also looks thicker. There is no fixed rule as to how often manes or tails should be washed. Some people have weekly competitions and always wash manes and tails before the event. Others only give them a wash when the tail is dirty or the horse has an itchy mane. Rubbing of mane and tail

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PHOTO: DIGISHOTS



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*The cleaner mane
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in condition*

should be avoided at all times because that will prompt a very premature end to that beautiful wealth of hair. Overall it can be said that the cleaner mane and tail are, the better they stay in condition.

Both mane and tail can be washed with a horse shampoo. Very thorough rinsing afterwards is essential to prevent itching, which would lead to rubbing and loss of hair. After washing it is a good idea to spray mane and tail with a detangler lotion so that they will be easier to unravel once they have dried off. The best approach is to sift through the hairs with the hands first and then maybe later use a brush to comb them through. This is the best way to avoid pulling out hairs and to make sure mane and tail keep their wonderfully long and full looks.

Feathers on the legs

Friesians are supposed to have abundant feathers, and grooming can help to make the horse look even more its best. For example the feathers on the legs, for Friesians it is quite right when these are nice and long. Some people may choose to clip part of the legs on the back side from the top downwards, leaving the socks in place. This method really helps to highlight the horse's base and is quite common practice with horses that go to inspections. Like mane and tail it is vital to keep a Friesian horse's feathers in good condition. So frequent washing is part of the routine, but always make sure all the shampoo is rinsed off to prevent itching. Checking the skin under the feathers should also be part of the routine. Long hairs are an excellent breeding place for unwanted creatures like mites and mud fever is also more common in horses with lots of feathers on the legs.

Regulations for grooming the head

To enhance the facial expression of your Friesian's head it needs some grooming too. There are however,

a few rules (as agreed within the KFPS) to heed in order to safeguard animal welfare. Clipping on the inside of the ears is forbidden because these hairs have a purpose. They make up a natural barrier to stop flies and other bugs from flying into the ears. Only the hairs sticking out on the outside can be clipped. This is done by softly pressing both sides together and then trimming or clipping the hairs that are protruding. The whiskers around the mouth are also a nogo area for trimming because doing that would badly affect the horse's tactile sense. Minimum length is one centimetre. The tuft of mane right behind the ears can be clipped or trimmed for practical reasons. This spot is called the bridle path, it is where the headpiece of the bridle rests on the poll. It is not very comfortable for a horse when the bridle is fitted on top of a thick tuft of mane and also increases the risk of the bridle slipping over the head more easily. Having trimmed the bridle path also helps to set off the forelock from the mane.



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PHOTO: ZEELEN EN DAMHOF FOTOGRAFIE

Veterinary: preventing, identifying, and treating illnesses and disorders

TEXT: AGEETH VAN DER LEE
VETERINARIAN GERRIT KAMPMAN

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In spite of having had the best of raising conditions, accommodation, care and feeding, a Friesian horse can become ill. Since Friesian horses are reluctant to show signs of discomfort and illness, it is key to recognise diseases as soon as possible. For correct treatment the help of a skilled veterinarian must be called in, preferably one who has experience with Friesian horses. Here is a selection of the most important diseases and disorders and please note that Friesian horses are more susceptible to some.

Locomotion apparatus

Lameness: further examination necessary

A lame horse moves with irregular paces. The severity of the lameness depends on the cause and can vary between a very light deviation in movement to complete immobility or willingness to bear weight on one or more legs. In order to establish which leg is, (or legs are) painful, the veterinarian will examine a lame horse on a circle by making it move alternately on a soft and a hard surface. With further examinations, X-raying and a local anaesthetic the vet can pinpoint the cause of the lameness.

Arthrosis: degeneration of the joints

Arthrosis is a disorder caused by the wear in a horse's joints. Arthrosis cannot be cured but with good management the progression of the degeneration can be slowed down. In a healthy joint the bones that move across each other are protected by a layer of cartilage on the bone ends. Joints are filled with a synovial (lubrication) fluid. Damage to the cartilage can for example, be caused by excessive strain on the joint due to intensive training or inflammation in the joint, which negatively affects the shockabsorbing function of the cartilage. If the arthrosis occurs in one or more legs the horse will start to show signs of lameness. The more advanced in age, the longer the joints have felt the strain and the greater the odds arthrosis will set in. In cases of light arthrosis, anti-inflammatories and supplements like glucosamine can alleviate the

condition. Adjustments in exercise and a healthy body weight contribute to the successful management of arthrosis.

Laminitis: a metabolic disorder

Laminitis (aka founder) is caused by a disorder in the horse's metabolic system which triggers inflammations in the hoof, especially in the forelegs. The most common cause for metabolic issues is overweight. Horses turned out in spring in rich pastures with lush, young grass ingest too many fructans, sugars, which can lead to laminitis. Specific types of medicine can cause laminitis too. A clear symptom in a laminitic horse is leaning backwards to take the weight off the affected feet. When moving, the horse will walk very carefully, as if treading on eggshells. Laminitis is extremely painful for horses so the veterinarian must be called in immediately. The best thing to do is put the horse on a soft, preferably wet (sand) surface, to cool the feet and keep them supple. The feeding regime must be adjusted to prevent the laminitis from progressing to a chronic condition.

Digestive organs

Colic: umbrella name for abdominal pain

Colic is the generic term for any type of bellyache. Abdominal pains can have a series of causes. If a horse ingests too much sand, for example because it is fed hay on a sand surface in a paddock or when pulling the last blades of grass from the field complete with roots

and adhering sand, the sand will accumulate in the gut and cause pain in the stomach. Apples can start to ferment in the intestines which causes a buildup of gas. If this gas cannot find a way out then it causes flatulence, resulting in flatulent colic. Horses living on straw bedding who tend to eat all the straw at once can end up with constipated bowels, which also results in colic. Horses are by nature not capable of vomiting so spoiled food can also lead to pain in the abdomen. Horses displaying symptoms of colic will be restless and in more severe cases, start sweating and rolling. If this is the case the veterinarian must be alerted straightaway.

Ulcers: adjust feeding regimes and management

Horses in the wild eat and forage most of the day so

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the horse's gut has a more or less constant supply of fodder to process. Horses kept in captivity are fed large portions of food just a couple of times a day. For the rest of the day the gut has nothing to digest, which causes a buildup of gastric juices. The excess of gastric juices can damage the intestinal walls and create lesions, called ulcers. When the veterinarian assumes the horse is suffering from ulcers he will prescribe antacids. If this leads to a huge improvement in the horse's condition and appetite and the horse becomes more lively then the veterinarian can positively diagnose the cause to be ulcers. The presence of ulcers can be established with certainty by using an endoscope (a flexible tube fitted with a camera) to look into the gut. Treatment of ulcers consists of administering antacids, adjusting feeding regimes and



*Rich pasture with lush,
young grass contains too
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laminitis*

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management. Stressful situations for the horse should be avoided as much as possible and roughage should be fed several times a day, preferably even be available all day long.

Oesophageal paralysis: pile-up of food

The oesophagus, (gullet) runs from the throat to the stomach. The muscles in the oesophagus contract, called peristalsis, to transport food to the stomach. In the case of oesophageal paralysis, mega-oesophagus, the oesophagus is dilated due to loss of muscle tone. Food is no longer transported to the stomach and stays in the oesophagus, causing severe dilation. Horses in the early stages of oesophageal paralysis eat very slowly with excessive salivation. The condition usually becomes acute when the piledup food causes a blockage in the oesophagus. By means of endoscopy, keyhole surgery, the veterinarian will examine the oesophagus. Treatment and prognosis depend on the degree of dilation in the oesophagus and the horse's age.



PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

Atypical myopathy: beware of sycamore maple trees (ahorns)

Horses affected by atypical myopathy suffer from deterioration of muscle which makes movement difficult or even impossible. The urine shows up red because it contains broken down muscle proteins. Progress of the disease is extremely fast, horses can die as early as a couple of hours or at most two days following contamination. Investigations into the precise causes of atypical myopathy are still ongoing. In order to prevent atypical myopathy it is crucial to make sure horses are never in a position to eat sycamore leaves, seeds or seedlings.

Skin disorders

Sweet Itch: allergic reaction

Friesian horses are susceptible to sweet itch, sometimes called summer eczema. Sweet itch is an allergic reaction to the bites of a small bug, midges. This midge usually attacks with bites in the area of mane and tailset to draw blood. The saliva which gets into



PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO

Horse breeds with abundant feathers, the socks, are more often affected by mud fever

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the horse's skin via the bites can trigger an allergic reaction. The horse suffers from severe itching and will use anything available to rub, until the point of bleeding, to get rid of the itching. Best prevention is to make sure the horse is not exposed to these midges, which can be achieved by using a good quality eczema rug. If the weather is good, the midges can be active as early as spring and during the summer months.

Mud Fever: particularly in horses with lots of feathers

Inflammation of skin on the lower legs, especially in the pastern cavity, are categorised under the generic term of mud fever. Mud fever, ranging from reddish skin to little wounds and crustations, is more likely to develop when the pastern cavity remains wet for too long. This causes softening of skin which is then more prone to damage by sand or insects. Horse breeds with abundant feathers, the socks, are more often affected by mud fever. Another reason for mud fever can be the presence of mange- or itchmites. The mange mite triggers itching which causes the horse to

start rubbing or biting the lower legs. By analysing a skin sample the veterinarian can identify the cause of the mud fever and apply treatment.

Blood circulation

Aortic rupture: more common in Friesian horses

Aortic rupture is a rupture in the aorta, the body's biggest coronary artery. Compared to other breeds, this disorder is more common in Friesian horses. The place where the rupture occurs in the aorta also differs from Warmbloods. The average age when this very breed-specific rupture in the aorta occurs is about four, veterinarian Professor Dr. Catharine Delesalle states. A rupture in the aorta happens very suddenly, resulting in instant death of the horse. Occasionally it starts with a small fissure which may remain stable for a longer period, even months, before it proves fatal for the horse. If this is the case there are a few signs hinting at the horse's condition, such as sluggishness, nose bleeds, pale mucous membranes, coughing and a consistently high pulse rate. A lot of research is being conducted into aortic rupture in Friesian horses. Unfortunately, there is no prevention or cure for aortic rupture.

Viral infections

Influenza: the possibility of vaccinations

Horses can develop influenza by contracting the equine influenza virus. There are various active types of the influenza virus. The virus can be transmitted via horse-to-horse contact, but also by way of contaminated clothing or for instance brushes that are used on different horses. About three days after contamination the horse starts to develop symptoms of the disease: fever, sluggishness, coughing, poor appetite and a nasal discharge. Best practice is to separate sick horses from the others. A good and effective vaccination against influenza is available on the market. Horses that are up-to-date with their influenza injections can still contract the disease but will not be too badly affected. Horses should be given influenza vaccinations at least once every year.

Equine Rhinopneumonitis: from a cold to abortion

Rhinopneumonitis is brought on by a virus. Horses are often exposed to this virus but do not always become ill because of it. Rhinopneumonitis can manifest itself in three forms. The least serious variety only causes symptoms of a cold in affected horses: light fever, coughing and a runny nose. This flutype Rhinopneumonitis is caused by the equine herpes virus type 4, for which a vaccination can be administered to horses. The equine herpes virus type 1 can spread through the entire body and prompt an abortion in pregnant mares. When this type of virus travels to the spinal cord the virus is known, in rare cases, to produce symptoms of paralysis, especially in the hind legs and making it impossible for the horse to stand. If Rhinopneumonitis has been diagnosed in a horse then all horses in the affected yard must be kept separate from each other. Spreading of the virus takes place via direct contact between infected horses but humans too can transmit the virus with their hands or clothing.

Bacterial infections

Strangles: extremely contagious

The culprit which causes strangles (aka as glanders) is the *Streptococcus equi*. Strangles often attacks young stock with a reduced resistance. Initially the horse only seems to be suffering from a cold, but after a few days bumps and abscesses start to materialise around the throat, which can burst. Alternatively, the veterinarian can open these abscess to allow the pus to drain away. At this stage the horse is badly ill, runs a fever and is short of breath. Incidentally, a horse can die of the consequences of strangles. Horses that have recovered from strangles have built up some resistance against the disease, but over the years this resistance will diminish again. So older horses can also contract this highly contagious disease.



PHOTO: DIGISHOTS



PHOTO: JANNIE WIERING

Hoof- and dental care: good feet and teeth are essential for a healthy horse

TEXT: MARIJE STOMPS

It's a well-known expression: 'no foot, no horse'. It means that the only way horses are able to function is with good, healthy hooves. The same is true for teeth: a good set of teeth is essential for chewing and guaranteeing a sufficient intake of nutrients.

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Hoof care starts with foals

Good care of a horse's feet, and that includes Friesian horses, starts with choosing a skilled, certified farrier. It is really important to keep the horse's feet in good condition. It is not to use arguing that horses living in a natural environment do not get regular visits by a farrier either. Feral horses roam free for up to thirty kilometres a day to forage for food and that way their hooves wear off naturally. This is absolutely not the case with our presentday utility horses. Our Friesian horses spend most of the time in their stables, always walk on soft surfaces and their food is handed to them on a silver platter. The feet do not get much wear and therefore require a different approach. Enter the farrier! This must be done from a very young age. Especially foals with a deviating stance of the legs can benefit from good, skilled trimming of the feet. Later, when the horse is more advanced in age and the growth plates have solidified, it is much more difficult to change the stance of the feet without causing discomfort to the horse.

A good guideline is to arrange a visit, and if necessary, treatment by the farrier every eight weeks. A horse's hooves grow about one hoof length per year. Hoof growth is usually higher in summer than in winter and weather conditions also play a part, for example when the ground is very dry and hard hooves become brittle and may start to crumble. If in doubt about the condition of the hooves it is always wise to ask advice from the farrier.

Protective irons

The Friesian horses can function really well on their 'bare' feet. Once they are trained under saddle or in harness Friesian horses can be, which means the feet are fitted with irons. These irons are made to measure for each foot by the farrier and attached with hoof nails. Irons protect the feet from uneven or rapid wear,

*A horse's hooves
grow about one hoof
length per year*

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CHOOSING A PROFESSIONAL

Farrier and equine dentist vocations are both liberal professions. Everybody is entitled to call him/herself a farrier or equine dentist, even without having completed a thorough vocational training. What is the best way to find a skilled farrier or equine dentist with certified qualifications? First check if the person in question is a member of a professional association. In Europe the association for farriers is called the European Federation of Farriers Association (EFFA). The Dutch Association for Farriers is also a member of this umbrella organisation. Similar associations can be found in other parts of the world, like the American Farriers Association and the Australian Farriers & Blacksmiths Association.

Equine dentists have their own associations, in the Netherlands for example there is the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Gebitsverzorging bij het Paard ((NVVGP) Dutch Association for Equine Dental Care, ed.)). All equine dentists who are a member of this association are certified professionals and follow annual refreshment courses. A comparable organisation in America is the IAED, residing at the same location as the Academy of Equine Dentistry, which is the largest and most esteemed equine dentist education in the world.



PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

for instance when a horse often walks on hard ground. It is also possible to fit studs under the irons. These are hard tips, a bit like the studs on football boots, which provide more grip for the horse on slippery grass surfaces or for instance when horsesleighing on ice or in the snow.

Irons can also be used to improve a horse's functional locomotion. When horses are often ridden on hard surfaces the irons are bound to wear rapidly, so it may even be necessary to call the farrier in every six weeks. This also applies to horses that are regularly ridden with studs fitted to the irons because that can cause friction on the hoof. As Friesians are a coldblooded breed with a thicker hoof wall than warmbloods, Friesians are often shod with slightly wider irons than usual. These are a better fit and stay in place a bit longer. Other than this, hoof care for Friesians is the

same as for other horses, which includes picking out the hooves at least three times a week.

To the dentist

The same as with the feet, the teeth of a domesticated (Friesian) horse have a completely different wear than is the case with their feral counterparts. Regular checks and potential treatment are therefore necessary. If something is amiss in the horse's mouth this usually becomes evident during feeding or riding. It is good practice to start regular dental care from the age of three. That is the time when the horse is still shedding its baby teeth and the specialized dentist or veterinarian can check if everything is going well. If there are certain issues in the mouth then it is far better to put that right before the horse is tacked up with a bit. Socalled wolf teeth for example, have to be extracted first because they may get in the way of the bit.

A good principle would be to call in the equine dentist or veterinarian to check the horse's teeth on an annual basis. Some horses may need more frequent checks, for instance because their teeth show uneven wear or they are prone to developing hooks on their molars. The equine dentist is equipped to remedy such problems. He makes sure the horse's teeth are wellbalanced so that the horse has the full use of its teeth and molars. Horses are usually treated under a very light anaesthetic and the mouth is kept open with a mouth speculum. That enables the dentist to carry out treatment deep in the mouth.

Annual checks ensure that most problems with teeth are spotted early and can possibly be prevented. But if the horse is not feeding well in between checks, starts quidding (dropping little balls of the feed), loses weight for no apparent reason, develops bad breath, starts having problems with the contact on the bit or even resists the bit then it is key to ask for immediate assistance by an equine dentist.





PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO



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PHOTO: JIJTZE GRUJESTRA

*Remember to have your
Friesian horse's teeth
checked by an equine
dentist every year*



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PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

Sport

TEXT: MARIJE STOMPS

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Dressage: completely at home inside the white boards

Our modern Friesian horse is multi-talented and at home in many disciplines of equine sports, up to the highest levels. Dressage is undoubtedly the sport most commonly practised with Friesian horses. A Friesian in the ring, be that at elementary level or the Grand Prix, is no longer an exception. The Friesian breed has proven to be a fantastic dressage horse.

Amazing development

In recent years the Friesian horse has gone through an impressive development in dressage sports. It is not even that long ago when the appearance of Friesian horses in dressage rings outside Friesland raised eyebrows. These days Friesian horses are a common sight in dressage sports. The breed has shown to hold its own with other warmblood breeds because, by now, several Friesian horses have made their way to the pinnacle of dressage: the Grand Prix. This, by origin Baroque breed, has a natural talent for moving in a closed outline and performing exercises with the highest degree of difficulty, such as piaffe and passage and this is a great asset in the ring. In recent years the Friesian horse has gradually evolved to a sports horse with a classy appearance, which has been greatly beneficial for the under-saddle discipline. Also working

in its favour, particularly in sports where beauty is a key ingredient, is the Friesian horse's magnificent, impressive appearance with a superb front and abundant feathers.

The pioneering work of Anders 451

Leading the way to promote the recognition of the Friesian horse as a dressage horse was done by the Friesian Studbook stallion Anders 451. He was the first Friesian horse who, with his South African rider Chère Burger, took part in a major Championship, the 2014 World Equestrian Games in Caen. Since then the Friesian horse has been doing better and better in the dressage ring. Important key players in this process are various competitions, championships and talent programmes intended for Friesian horses. This does not only help to stimulate the use of Friesian horses in dressage, these events also provide a fantastic podium for our Friesian breed to position itself in its full glory as dressage horse. Let's highlight a few of these specific Friesian horse competitions.

Pavo Fryso Cup

This competition takes place in the summer during various breeding days and here young Friesian horses with dressage aptitude compete against each other. The 4-, 5- and 6-year-old horses – stallions/geldings as well



PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

as mares – demonstrate their aptitude for dressage sports and are assessed on movement and exercises compatible with their age. The best Friesian horses win a ticket for the finals which are ridden at the Central Inspection and there they vie for the Pavo Fryso Cup. For more information: www.pavofrysobokaal.nl

Friesian Talent Cup

Like the Pavo Fryso Cup, the Friesian Talent Cup is a competition for young Friesian horses with dressage aptitude, but only for 3-year-old horses. Selection days are held across the country, with a section mares and a section stallions/geldings. The semi-final will take place halfway December. Eventually the best eight mares and the best eight stallions/geldings are invited for the grand finale early January during the KFPS Stallion Inspection in Leeuwarden. For more information: www.friesiantalentcup.com

The Silver Whip

The Horses2fly KFPS sport competition has existed for about twenty years now. What started out as a low-threshold dressage competition especially for Friesian horses, has evolved into one of the major indoor events in the Netherlands. Not only has the number of competitors gone up considerably, the level has also hugely improved.

This sport competition for Friesian dressage horses is ridden in the winter. At events all across the Netherlands, combinations of all elementary levels (B up to ZZ-Light) compete for a much-coveted ticket for the finals in Sonnega, in late February. The best combinations in the B/L and M/Z categories are awarded a Silver Whip. For more information: www.kfpssport.nl

Alrako KFPS Championship

A fine conclusion at the end of the outdoor season is the ALRAKO KFPS Championship. This Dutch



PHOTO: DICISHOTS

competition, popularly known as the Dutch Championship Friesian horses, is for Friesian horses from B through to ZZ-Light levels. The objective of this championship is to stimulate the use of Friesian horses under saddle and take it to a higher level. These events are organised by breeding chapters with the finals taking place in Ermelo. Nowadays, this is also the location of a hugely successful and official Subtop

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*The Friesian horse
has a natural talent
for piaffe and passage*

competition (ZZ-Heavy through to Grand Prix) and includes a competition quadrille riding for four and six with Friesians. For more information: www.dressuurkampioenschapfrieschpaard.nl

EC Friesian Dressage Horse

To help the Friesian horse catch up with the top regions in dressage sports, the Stichting Kennis en Promotieplatform Fries Dressuurpaard (K&PP (Foundation Knowledge & Promotion Platform Friesian Dressage Horse, ed.)) organises the annual European Championship Subtop Dressage and Young Horses. Here riders from all over Europe can take part with their Friesian horses in classes from ZZ-Heavy through to the Grand Prix. Along with combinations from the Netherlands there are entries from France, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Germany. Also on the programme are categories for 4-, 5-, 6- and 7-year-old Friesian horses. In addition to the EC the K&PP organises

Platform days offering a wide range of subjects related to dressage sports. For more information: www.platformfriesdressuurpaard.nl

Mei Grand Prix Nei Grand Prix

Mei Grand Prix Nei Grand Prix (MGPNGP) is a prestigious project to help talented Friesian riders to find their way to the highest attainable in dressage sports: the Grand Prix. For this purpose the riders are offered lessons and coaching by renowned dressage trainers. Since 2016 the KFPS has liaised with MGPNGP and enabled riders to take part with Friesian horses. Several fine successes have already materialised. Marsja Dijkman for instance, has succeeded in fulfilling her grand dreams of riding Grand Prix, which she did with Friesian stud stallion Haitse 425. MGPNGP Junior was launched to stimulate young riders to make the most of their talents. For more information: www.meigrandprixneigrandprix.nl



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PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

STUDBOOK STALLIONS IN THE SPORT

It's not just that numbers of Friesian horses in the ring are going up, we see more and more KFPS Studbook stallions among them. People are increasingly aware that personal performances in the sport represent added value for individual horses, also in the context of breeding. Fine examples of Friesian Studbook stallions having climbed the ladder to Grand Prix are Elias 494 with Marc Peter Spahn and Walt 487 with Hennie Roffel. The present trend showcases that more and more Friesian stallions are competing in dressage sports at levels compatible with their age. In 2018 over 50% of Friesian stallions up to the age of twelve were active at Z level, 16% at ZZ-Light or ZZ-Heavy and 15% at Subtop level.



PHOTO: INCRID TRUIJENS

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PHOTO: DIGISHOTS



PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

*The special competitions
for Friesian horses
make a wonderful
platform*



PHOTO: JOHANNA FABER

More sports: from traditional showdriving, sporty driving to endurance

TEXT: MARIJE STOMPS

www.friesianhorse.ir

True to the traditional history of the Friesian horse breed, Friesians are still widely used for driving, especially in Friesland. It is a wonderful sight and the perfect way to show off the magnificence of these proud, black pearls. In addition to, sometimes very traditional carriage driving, Friesian horses are highly suitable for other driving disciplines like four-in-hand driving or less obvious sports such as endurance.

Showdriving sports

By origin, the Friesian horse is of course a true coach horse and traditional showdriving with Friesians is still hugely popular in this day and age. There are various events that offer in-harness competitions for Friesian horses. Usually the horses are hitched up to the 'sjees', an old-style Friesian single-axle carriage with very large wheels. The drivers, men as well as women, are dressed in traditional Friesian costumes dating back to 1850. There are various categories. Young horses up to the age of six are mostly entered in the competition categories. Friesian horses with no or just a few years' experience in front of the carriage take part in Limit Classes. The highest showdriving class for Friesian horses is the Honorary Class. This class is open to the best horses of the Limit Class. Ladies and gentlemen alike are allowed to compete Friesian horses in showdriving sports but there is also a class for women only, called the Ladies' Class. In the two-in-hand category the sjees is pulled by a team of two horses with a man and a woman side by side in the box seat. There are further options such as tandem driving (one horse behind the other), Unicorn (a team in front of the sjees and one leader) and there is a competition four-in-hand driving where the horses usually pull an authentic carriage such as a Landau. All these drivers are called national drivers.

Driving

Showdriving with Friesian horses is fairly costly because – apart from the horse – purchases include a sjees and the traditional costumes. This is the reason why a new discipline was introduced towards the end of the previous century: driving with a showcarriage. This is a modern, four-wheel carriage. This discipline also has various categories. Most novices and inexperienced horses take part in the Limit Class. There is a specific Novice Class for youngsters and after that comes the Honorary Class, the highest possible level within this branch of showdriving. More categories include a separate Ladies' Class and a two-in-hand category. Since 2007 young riders between 16 and 26 have had the option to participate in the Young Riders Competition. This is a less traditional class which allows the Young Riders more freedom in choice of attire and they can enter the ring to music of their own choosing. This is an opportunity to move with the times and at the same time engage young people in the wonderful world of showdriving.

*The Friesian horse is
seen in its full glory
when pulling the
sjees, with the drivers
dressed in traditional
Friesian costumes*

Ring riding

The pinnacle of Friesian folklore is the tradition of ring riding. These competitions are often held in village streets where magnificently dressed-up combinations show themselves off to the audience. For these occasions the Friesian horse is hitched up to a sjees, often an authentic, curved sjees. The lady and gentleman in the box seat are dressed in Friesian costumes of the 1850s. The lady's task is to catch a dangling ring with her lance. Even though passion often gets the upper hand, the most important aim of this folklore ring riding is to preserve this long-standing and old-style Friesian tradition.

Competitions

Several competitions have been introduced to advance the use of Friesian horses in driving- and showdriving sports and to test the horse's talent for these disciplines. Various breeding chapters organise competitions for the Pavo Fryso Cup, offering two alternatives: one for young Friesian horses with showdriving aptitude and one for young Friesian horses with aptitude for driving dressage. Both competitions offer categories

*Quadrilles, the Friesian
Train, performing in
films, endurance ...
the Friesian horse takes
it all in its stride*

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for Friesian horses of the ages four, five and six. Mares are assessed separately from stallions/geldings. The finals take place in Drachten during the Central Inspection in mid September.

The Horses2fly KFPS Sport competition is intended to give another boost to the promotion of the versatile Friesian breed in competition sports. Combinations can participate in the discipline Friesian showdriving horses aged four, five and six. During the final at the KFPS Stallion Inspection they compete for the 'it Stiennen Hynder'. For Young Riders there is an additional style prize to be won. Driving horses can be entered for an indoor as well as outdoor sport competition. The indoor final is held in Sonnega where the prize to be won is the Tin Driver.

Extremely multi-talented


Competitions specifically for Friesian horses are not the only places where The Friesian horse can be spotted and admired. They are quite capable of holding their own among warmblood horses, for instance during 'ordinary' driving competitions for singles, two-in-hand or four-in-hand combinations. And let's not forget the wonderful spectacle of Friesians pulling the Gilded carriage on the Day of the Kings Speech every other year. This may not have a direct link to sport with Friesians, but generates fantastic publicity for our black pearls. The same is true for the many shows enacted all over the world in which Friesians make an appearance. From The Efteling (Dutch amusement park, ed.) to carrying the Olympic flame across a frozen lake in Vancouver, the Friesian Train, quadrille riding and performances in films like The Hunger Games. But our breed can also be seen in sports not usually associated with Friesian horses. For example endurance, long-distance riding over distances ranging from 20 up to 160 km. The Friesian horse takes it all in his stride. 



PHOTO: BIANCA DOUWES

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PHOTO: JOHANNA FABER



PHOTO: MARK MULVIJK

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PHOTO: CEMMA JANSEN

Recreation: from mega beach ride to a jump and 'beljeien' on ice

TEXT: MARIJE STOMPS

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There are plenty of ways to enjoy your Friesian horse. Going for a hack or beach ride, in driven or under-saddle work, or perhaps even in front of the sleigh. Besides being enormously multi-talented and impressive to behold, Friesians are especially suited for recreational use thanks to their reliable and honest character.

Fun with Friesians

A special bond with your horse and having fun together, that is the main thing for most owners of Friesian horses. The daily contact and care, riding together or any other way of interaction with the horse is a blessing in itself, and you can have all that without riding competitions. The Friesian horse is used for all kinds of recreational purposes. Let's explore some of these attractive possibilities.

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Spectacular beach ride

Hacking out with your Friesian is always a pleasure. Going for a beach ride is probably even more enjoyable. But when hundreds of riders gather together to thunder across the beach with their Friesian mounts this is an incredible and spectacular sight. This is what happens during the Beach Ride Friesian Horses which, since 2010, is being organised every three years. For the 2019 edition a stunning 450 Friesian horses assembled on the beach near Callantsoog to do just that. Thousands of people flocked to the site to witness it and various media have broadcast footage of this ride.

Friesians on ice

In bygone days horse and cart were the obvious transport, even in barren, wintry conditions with snow and ice. This is the time when Friesians were hitched

PHOTO: MARIELLA SCHOLTZE





PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK

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up to the sleigh. These antique and authentic sleighs are still being used, for example for a winner's lap at major speed-skating competitions in Heerenveen. A wonderful spectacle, even more so since the Friesian horse pulling the sleigh is clad in a traditional bell harness complete with plumages on the head. Since 2018 the event Friesians on Ice is being organised to promote both riding and ring riding with sleighs. This event also hosts the Dutch Championship 'beljeien' for Friesian horses, which is a speed class with sleighs where Friesian horses engage in a race to be the first to cross the finish.

Show and folklore

There are still lots more examples for events in which the Friesian horse has a lead role because of its magnificent appearance and fine character. Think of performances in shows, with the theatre production The Storm Rider - with over one hundred Friesians -

*Caring for, riding,
but also the mere
interaction with the
Friesian horse is a
blessing in itself*

being one of the grandest examples. Freestyle dressage, under saddle, all sorts of driving combinations: the Friesian horse seems to be able to turn its hoof to just about anything. Sometimes folklore plays a prominent role. Like the sleigh riding mentioned earlier, but also in the re-enactment of a traditional Friesian wedding as it was done back in the 1850s. The bridal couple and guests are dressed in traditional garments and transported in wonderfully decorated sjeeses pulled by Friesians. These are core elements of the 'Boerebrulloft' which includes the bare-back trotting races on Friesians - where horses are not allowed to canter - and not to forget ring riding in an antique, curved sjees. The bottom line is that whatever people do with their Friesians, from Grand Prix to Honorary Classes, from keen breeders to recreational riders, we all share the same passion. The passion for the Friesian breed.





PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

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PHOTO: PETER LANDSTRA



PHOTO: JITZKE GRUIJSTRA



PHOTO: MARIJE STOMPS

Let's get down to work: the importance of good training

TEXT: MARIJE STOMPS

The Friesian horse is extremely suitable for riding and driving, both in a recreational or in a competitive context. Something to remember though, is that there is a lot more to it than just riding. A good training regime, professional coaching and regular training sessions are key ingredients to keep a Friesian horse healthy.

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Fit horse in good condition

Although Friesian horses are known for their very good working mentality and gentle character, they are not motor bikes that can be taken out of the shed to take them for a spin every once in a while.

Good training and building condition is absolutely key. This principle really is the basis for all disciplines with Friesian horses. Even if the horse is only used for long, recreational hacks in woodlands then it is still only fair to the horse to train it more than just once a week, so that he will be fit enough to cope with the hacking.

Quiet start at the age of three

Horses, and that includes Friesian horses, are usually first introduced to work when they are about three years old. At this age the horse is still in his growing phase, but controlled, light work is good for the development of strong bones, tendons and ligaments in the body. A rule of thumb often applied in the horse

world is: a 3-year-old should be trained three times a week; a 4-year-old four times a week; a 5-year-old five times a week and so on. However, short and more frequent training sessions are far better for young stock than long but incidental training sessions. Just like children young horses have a short concentration span and tire pretty quickly, so continuing the training would be useless and is probably counterproductive anyway. By the way, the same applies to older and more experienced horses. Endless repetitions of the same exercise or overloading your horse when he is already tired is bound to have a negative effect.

Athleticizing on the lunge

There are various approaches to training horses. Lunging is often used as the first step before introducing the horse to the saddle or harness, but at the same time a very effective way to train more experienced horses. When lunging, the horse circles around the

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*To improve dressage
work good instruction
is essential*



PHOTO: DIGISHOTS

PHOTO: PROMOPHOTOS



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PHOTO: MARJE STOMPS



PHOTO: MARJE STOMPS

*Just like young children
young horses have a
short concentration span
and tire pretty quickly*

handler on an eight-meter-long lunge. Some people like to lunge their horse on just a headcollar from time to time, to give him a chance to stretch his legs and put in the occasional buck when he feels like it. But lunging is also very constructive for athleticizing horses. For this purpose a training aid comes in very handy to encourage the horse to move in the desired outline, for example forward and down. There are also specific lunging training aids that are looped behind the hindquarters to encourage more activity from the hind legs. Lunging therefore, can be a useful, non-weight bearing way to train the horse and boost fitness and agility.

Under saddle or in harness

Many Friesian horses are ridden under saddle. Depending on the level of rider and horse it may be sensible to start by calling in the help of a good coach and instructor. Also good practice is to lunge young or feisty horses first before riding. When horse and rider have bonded it depends on the intended use of the horse how best to proceed. To improve your dressage work

good instruction is essential, no matter whether you are keen to learn proper riding skills or have your ambition firmly fixed on Grand Prix riding. What works well is to choose specific goals for each training session, like riding thirty transitions, keeping the horse relaxed in all paces or riding a lot of schooling figures. That way the riding will be more interesting and offer more variation for horse and rider.

By and large the same principles should be observed for the driving disciplines, although here it is even more important to have a second person at hand. This person can lend a hand when hitching and unhitching the horse(s) and while out driving can always get off the carriage to get hold of the horses. Especially when getting out on the roads or going for hacks in the woodlands. A horse is not a machine but a living creature that can spook because of wildlife taking off or cars rushing past. Sadly, the consequences of driving accidents are usually much more serious than with riding accidents because a heavy carriage is involved.



A BRIGHT HEAD THANKS TO VARIATION

Different disciplines like riding under saddle, driving or lunging are not incompatible or at odds with each other. On the contrary, they can be a welcome and refreshing change from the routine. In many cases driving horses are also ridden under saddle and riding horses are often put on the lunge too. At competitions many successful Friesian horses can be seen in both under-saddle classes as well as the in-harness classes. Lots of variety in the training regime is not only beneficial for the horse, but also keeps him eager and keen. It has the same effect as hacking out or riding in the woods. That is the way to keep Friesian horses happy.



PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK



PHOTO: KARIN SEVINK

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Sport: also important for breeding

TEXT: MARIJE STOMPS

What has sport got to do with breeding? A lot, because the only way to improve the sport qualities of the entire population of Friesian horses is having good selection procedures in place and by matching the right stallions to the right mares. That makes it possible to breed a Friesian horse with a functional build for the sport, a horse that is healthy and vital and has sufficient capacity to perform well in the sport. A Friesian horse that has proven to have aptitude for the sport can be awarded the Sport- and Sport Elite predicates.

Aptitude tests

There is a series of predicates that illustrate a Friesian horse's qualities for the sport. Firstly, the aptitude tests are an important selection tool for breeding Friesian horses. As the name already implies, these are about testing a horse's aptitude for the sport without having to take part in official competitions. Competing horses in the sport is a costly and time-consuming affair for breeders. Aptitude tests are a shorter and less expensive way to find out if the Friesian horse concerned is talented for the sport. The predicates or certificates that can be acquired represent added value for breeding. The KFPS has two aptitude tests: the IBOP and the ABFP. Let's take a closer look at the tests and explain in more detail how they work.

IBOP

The IBOP (Instelling Bruikbaarheid Onderzoek Friese Paarden (Utility Examination Friesian Horses, ed.)) is a one-off test to determine a horse's aptitude and suitability for the intended use in an objective way. The horse is required to ride a test which is judged by KFPS Jury members. Depending on the intended use of the horse there are three options: a dressage test under saddle (riding test), driving dressage (driving test) or an in-harness test (showdriving test). The completion of a successful IBOP Test can be part of the process to obtain a Star-, Crown- or Model predicate for a horse. Minimum age of the horse for taking part in an IBOP Test is four. The possibility exists to ride IBOP Tests in foreign countries, which is done in consultation with the KFPS and the horses have to be judged by KFPS-approved Jury members. An above-average IBOP score is rewarded with an additional letter code. With scores between 73 and 77 the horse will receive the letter code A. With scores between 77 and 82 the letter code is AA and scores of 82 or higher receive the letter code AAA.

*Aptitude tests give
a good impression of
a Friesian horse's
talent for the sport*

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ABFP

In ABFP Tests (Aptitude- and Utility Test Friesian horses) the Friesian horse stays at a special test location where it will be ridden for a period of five to seven weeks and is assessed on suitability for the intended use. This can be dressage, driving or showdriving. Initially, the ABFP is for Friesian horses between the ages three and (including) five so that their talent can be assessed at a young age. In addition to dressage, driving and showdriving the horses are also assessed on work ethos and stable manners. When the

OFFICIAL SPORT RESULTS

Applications for Sport- and Sport Elite predicates can be sent in to the KFPS. The sport results however, are only valid if obtained at official KNHS (Royal Dutch Equestrian Sport Federation, ed.) competitions. Sport results obtained in foreign countries have to meet equivalent requirements and will be rated by the KFPS Sports Council.



PHOTO: KATRINA ROLSTON

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result is satisfactory the owner receives a certificate. Just like the IBOP. An above-average ABFP score is rewarded with an additional letter code. With scores between 73 and 77 the horse will receive the letter code A. With scores between 77 and 82 the letter code is AA and scores of 82 or higher receive the letter code AAA. The ABFP Test can be part of the process to obtain the Star-, Crown- or Model predicate.

Sport predicate

A Friesian horse with good performances at high levels in regular competition sports can earn the Sport predicate. At the same time this is proof that the Friesian horse in question is very talented for the sport and evidently has good sport genes, which is of value for potential breeding purposes. There are two predicates that can be earned. The first is the Sport predicate. This predicate is awarded if the Friesian horse in question:

- has progressed to minimum Z1 level in dressage with five scores of minimum 60%
- has achieved a minimum of five placings in the upper two-third part of an official showdriving Honorary Class where winning points can be won.
- has progressed to minimum ZZ level in driving dressage with at least five scores of 60%
- has progressed to driving (combined) class 3 with a minimum of 10 winning points

Sport Elite

The superlative of the Sport predicate is Sport Elite. This is only granted to Friesian horses with exceptional achievements in competition sports. The minimum requirements for obtaining the Sport predicate are:

- In dressage: Prix St. Georges level (or higher) with a minimum of five 60% scores
- having acquired the Sport predicate in all three disciplines, dressage, driving (dressage) and in-harness sports (show driving).

Sport genes

Meanwhile, quite a number of Friesian horses can boast the Sport- or even Sport Elite predicate. Among this select group are of course various KFPS stud stallions who have pushed their way up to the highest echelons in the sport. This works two ways: it proves the horse has great aptitude for the sport and can cope with the demands, implying he also has good sport genes to pass on. Thanks to his good accomplishments the stallion puts himself in the spotlight for breeders. For mares the Sport predicate definitely adds value to their pedigree. In this respect the mare Auckje fan 'e Aldy Ryd (Tsjalke 397) Crown Sport Elite is quite unique. She was the first, and for some time the only, mare who obtained the Sport predicate in all disciplines, that is in dressage, driving and showdriving and was therefore declared Sport Elite.





PHOTOS: KARIN SEVINK

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*An above-average
IBOP- and ABFP
scores are awarded
with an additional
letter code*



COLOPHON

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PHOTO: DIGISHOTS



*There she is,
our Friesian horse.
Proud. Strong. Intelligent.
Looking just that
little bit superior.
As if she is aware of
her centuries-old heritage.
As if she is aware of the place
she has in so many hearts.*

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