

Warmblood Studbook of Ireland

International Showjumpers with an Irish Accent



Approved under EU and Irish law as Ireland's modern and progressive sport horse studbook focused on all three Olympic disciplines

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WSI is a Full Member of the WBFISH



FRAGILE FOAL SYNDROME (WFFS1) TESTING IN IRELAND

On 13 May 2018 WSI launched a comprehensive testing programme for WFFS1. Through a programme unanimously approved in a referendum by WSI members, every foal has its WFFS1 status determined. In addition, every active Approved Stallion, active Approved Mare, and active Studbook Mare has had their status determined. Every non-carrier is awarded the D-WFFS1 predicate by WSI, and this predicate is printed in Irish Warmblood passports and zootechnical certificates. To date no Irish Warmblood has been found to be a carrier of the WFFS1 mutated allele.

On 23 May 2020 Horse Sport Ireland (HSI), the country's FEI affiliate and the commercial administrator of four studbooks, announced a "National Warmblood Fragile Foal Syndrome Testing Scheme" through which breeders can have their foals tested on a "first-come, first-served" basis until the unrevealed funding limit is reached. The objective of the Scheme is to determine the incidence of the mutated allele in the national herd and in individual studbooks, according to HSI documents. The scheme is funded by the Department of Agriculture. One of the incentives HSI is using to encourage breeders to participate is that the test result will be sent by HSI to whatever

studbook registers the foal. The purpose of sending the test result, according to HSI, is so the studbook that registers the foal will record it on the foal's zootechnical certificate, a document required under EU law to be contained in and/or attached to an equine passport.

WSI was not consulted by the Department of Agriculture or HSI about this scheme. If WSI had been consulted concerns would have been expressed including the appropriateness of having a company arrange for the testing of foals to be registered by studbooks with which it competes for foal registrations and other services. Sixteen additional concerns are detailed in the table below.

As WSI believes the HSI scheme is fundamentally flawed, WSI is unable to accept test results produced under the scheme. WSI encourages all breeders and buyers to conduct their own due diligence and to consider whether results produced under this scheme can be relied upon. WSI does not have confidence in the accuracy of the reported test results because of the procedures used by HSI and approved by the Department of Agriculture. WSI knows that incidence of the mutation in the national herd and in individual studbooks cannot be determined using the research methods employed by HSI. This study also cannot produce valid and unbiased estimates of the incidence of the WFFS1 mutation in the national herd or in individual studbooks because of HSI's sampling procedure.

For the last two years WSI has offered WFFS1 testing to owners of Irish Sport Horse mares, and we are pleased to offer this service to other breeders as well. WSI advises that any broodmare or breeding stallion with Thoroughbred genetics in its pedigree should be tested for the WFFS1 mutation. ■

Fragile Foal Syndrome (WFFS1) Testing Programmes

	WSI	HSI
All Foals in WFFS1 Testing Programme	Yes	No
All Approved Stallions, Approved Mares, and Studbook Mares in Testing Programme	Yes	No
Testing Programme Developed With Advice from Scientist Who Discovered WFFS1 Genetic Mutation	Yes	No
Testing Programme Voted on and Approved by Studbook Members	Yes	No
Test Results Used Only to Determine WFFS1 Carrier Status	Yes	No
Foal's Test Results Not Revealed in Publications or on Website	Yes	No
Foal's Data Not Used in Publications and Media Outlets	Yes	No
Foal's Data Withheld From Any Database Neither Controlled by Studbook nor Regulated by EU Law	Yes	No
Foal's Status as a Carrier Revealed Only in Zootechnical Certificate (as required by law) and to Foal Owner	Yes	No
Foal's Non-Carrier Status (and Non-Carrier Status of Sire and/or Dam) Printed in Its Passport	Yes	No
Non-Carrier Foal (and Mare & Stallion) Awarded Studbook Predicate (D-WFFS1) as a Quality Mark	Yes	No
Ongoing Expert Education & Breeding Advice Provided as a Key Component of Testing Programme	Yes	No
Foal's Single DNA Sample Must Be Used For Both Foal WFFS1 Test & Parentage Test	Yes	No
Testing Programme Complies with EU Law Requirements for Breeding Body Genetic Evaluations	Yes	No
Right for Change of Incorrect WFFS1 Carrier Classification is Guaranteed	Yes	No
Appropriate Data Collection & Research Methods Used to Calculate Valid Incidence of WFFS1 in Population	Yes	No

Register your sport foal with WSI. No Irish Warmblood has been identified as a carrier of WFFS1.*
*WSI's WFFS1 testing programme began on 13 May 2018. Statement is accurate as of publication date of 1 June 2020.