

# NZFHS Breeding Standards

This information is an extract from the Rules and Regulations of the KFPS. For a full copy, please [contact the secretary of the NZFHS](#).

## Inspections (Keuring)

The judging of all Friesian horses in New Zealand currently takes place once every 2 years. The next keuring will be in 2018

Classes for inspections commonly include:

- Inspection of mares for inclusion in the studbook, mares have to be at least 3 y.o. and have a minimum height of 1.54 meters (approx. 15.1 hands). If sufficient quality in conformation and movement, a mare can be declared “ster” (star)
- Same as above but for geldings
- Same as above but for stallions
- Inspection of studbook mares for the “ster” predicate
- Inspection of fillies and colts for a “premie” (premium), this can be a first, second or third premium or no premium
- Inspection of stallions for which an application for a (limited) studbook license has been made

Some of the Friesian specific hereditary defects that lead to rejection for inclusion are:

- Markings on the legs and elsewhere, except for a few white hairs around the muzzle or small star on the forehead
- chestnut color

To get a “ster” predicate, the mare, gelding or stallion has to strictly adhere to certain criteria, such as:

- Totally correct conformation
- Correct, extended movements with good extension
- Straight walk, powerful and flexible with good reach from the shoulder
- Hind legs are equally powerful and brought well forward underneath the body

- Trot is extended and elevated, with power from the hindquarters, light footed with a moment of suspension and good flexion of the hock
- No winging or paddling

The “model” predicate indicates that the mare is a model for the ideal Friesian horse. Apart from superior conformation and gaits, the mare must not be maiden and having passed an IBOP test (one day suitability test) or ABFP test (a 5 week aptitude and ability test).

The “preferent” (preferential) status is only awarded to very few horses and is based on superior overall quality of offspring, ie. the number of “ster” offspring.

Note: For detailed rules and regulations related to the inspections, [contact the secretary](#).

### **Breeding Objectives**

The overall goal is to breed quality horses with excellent conformation, that are capable of performing in the various equestrian disciplines, such as show driving, carriage driving, dressage and general recreational use, while maintaining the typical breed characteristics and further reducing inbreeding. This goal is to be achieved by careful selection within the breed.

### **Breed Characteristics**

- A harmoniously built, properly proportioned horse
- A noble head with clear, intelligent eyes and small, alert ears slightly pointing towards each other
- A slightly arched neck of adequate length
- A strong back joining a croup of good length, with not too much slope
- A body with good depth and well sprung ribs
- The legs and feet are strong, with a well-developed forearm and proper stance
- Fluid, square, elegant and elevated gaits emphasized by good feathering on the lower legs
- A fine mane, a beautiful long tail

Summarizing, a luxuriant honest horse with much presence and eagerness to work. When 3 years old, the ideal height at the withers should be 1.60m (approx. 15.3 hands). The preferred colour is jet-black. Only rusty blacks and matt blacks are also acceptable, with

no white markings except for a few small hairs around the muzzle and a small white star on the forehead.

### **Conformation index and linear scoring**

Since 1993, all 3, 4 and 5 year old horses to be included in the studbook have been judged on the basis of a linear scoring system. The conformation index is calculated on the basis of the scores.

The index serves as an aid for breeding, and is as such only one of them. It is an estimation only, and should be used to evaluate the actual value of the stallion in the breeding of a mare.

It is necessary for the breeder to have a thorough knowledge of the mare and consult the linear scoring form. By comparing the conformation index with the strong and weak points of the breeding mare, a stallion can be selected that is capable of improving the mare's weak points.

The index is included annually in the Phryso Magazine.

### **Inbreeding**

Inbreeding is the incidence of one or more identical ancestors in the pedigree of both the sire and the dam. Among Friesian horses, most of the inbreeding occurred early in the 20th century, from 1920-1920, 1930-1945 and 1960-1975. The breeding council recommends inbreeding to be limited to 5% when considering breeding with a mare.

The inbreeding coefficient measures the increase in homozygosity (consistency of certain breed characteristics) as based on a certain point of departure. Because the inbreeding coefficient is only a probable proportion, the actual degree of inbreeding in any case can be greater or smaller than was calculated on the basis of the pedigree using Wright's calculation method.

The breeding of Friesian Horses is founded on a relatively small basis, with only 3 sire pedigrees: the Tetman, Age and Ritske lines. Also worth noting is the fact that the Age line is fairly weakly represented in today's gene pool, while the influential Ritske has produced no dominant stallions. Although it is believed that quite a bit of progress has been made

in controlling inbreeding, it is still an on going concern in the breeding of Friesian Horses and deserves vigilance.

In terms of heredity, inbreeding produces a consistency in certain breed characteristics. They can be harmful or beneficial. If the goals of breeding are reinforced, they are beneficial, but they can be harmful when they lead to a reduction in vitality and fertility. Also listed as negative consequences are; retention of the afterbirth, the white factor, naval rupture and dwarfism. It is important to have this information included on the birth certificate.

### **Dwarfism and Hydrocephalus.**

Please be aware that it is now compulsory to test all breeding stock for Hydrocephalus and dwarfism. All approved stallions test results are now up on the KFPS site and can be viewed here .

New Zealand breeding permit stallions are also tested and results are available on the NZFHS website

The new KFPS rules are now also making it compulsory for all mares being used for breeding and for all ster mares to be tested PRIOR to the 2018 breeding season, so prior to 1st January 2018. All mares who achieve ster status at a keuring and are not already tested will have DNA samples taken and be tested as part of the upgrade process, and all mares foaling from now on if not already tested will have to submit DNA samples for testing as part of the foal registration process. If both of the mares parents are already tested as negative the KFPS and NZFHS will accept that is meaning the mare is also negative.

It is also compulsory to have non breeding permit stallions tested. All current non permit stallions being used for breeding must have their DNA test results submitted to the NZFHS by no later than 31st Dec 2017 and resultant foals born after 1st Jan 2018 by stallions who are untested will have to have the stallions DNA test done as part of the foals registration process.

DNA testing forms are available on the NZFHS website.