

Who and What

- Cornell University is conducting an **equine size study** and needs input by horse owners. According to the researchers who are exploring the **genetics of body size in the horse**, results of the study are expected to improve our understanding of the genetic diseases that affect horses and other mammals, including humans. For more information on **how you can participate**, please contact the Brooks and Sutter Genetics Labs at 607-254-8217 or 607-253-3592, or e-mail equinegenetics@cornell.edu or sutterlab@cornell.edu.
- Everyone has seen stories about **medical techniques** that were developed for the treatment of human athletes and then **adapted for equine use**. The next step—using equine veterinary techniques on other animals—involved helping a wild animal at the Louisville Zoo. Bakari, a Masai **giraffe**, was born with an **angular limb deformity** that kept him from being able to stand and nurse. Dr. Scott Bennett, an equine veterinarian practicing in Simpsonville, Kentucky, performed **periosteal stripping** to allow faster bone growth on the shorter side of the giraffe’s leg. This procedure is commonly used on **Thoroughbred foals** with the same type of problem. Bottle-fed during his recovery, Bakari is now more than six feet tall and is able to run with his mother and the rest of the zoo’s giraffe herd.
- Recent research suggests that **horses prefer to be handled from the left side**, possibly due to the way they interpret things seen with the eye on that side. Scientists in Austria compared horses trained predominantly from the left with those trained and handled equally from both sides. Most horses, regardless of training, favored the left eye and tried to keep people in the left line of vision. **The left eye is the “rapid-reaction” eye**, according to the research report. The researchers advise that horses should be handled from both sides, and they state that behaviors such as refusing to longe to the right may not be stubbornness but simply **wariness of things seen with the right eye**. Patience is advised until the horse gains confidence and realizes a handler on the right is not a threat.
- **A fodder-producing method** developed in Australia is being introduced to the United States market this fall. Fodder Solutions uses climate-controlled growing chambers that turn grain seed and water into **densely matted sprouts** within a few days. Beef and dairy cattle, sheep, goats, horses, pigs, and rabbits are reported to have welcomed the novel ration, and claims are being made as to health benefits and improved breeding performance in sprout-fed animals. A producer of organic milk has purchased a set of trays for his cattle farm near Modesto, California. *Kentucky Equine Research makes no statement, either positive or negative, as to the value or safety of feeding sprouted grain to any type of animal as fodder. Sudden changes of feed can greatly increase the risk of colic and other problems in horses, and are not recommended.*
- Centuries of **selective breeding** have produced speedy Thoroughbred horses with a big lung capacity, a high cardiac output, and a relatively large muscle mass in comparison to body weight. The same genetic makeup that separates Thoroughbreds from other breeds includes an overabundance of **genes involved in insulin signaling, fat metabolism, and muscle strength**, according to scientists at the Animal Genomics Laboratory in Ireland. Researchers are looking at these linked traits in an effort to better understand the relationships between exercise, human obesity, and Type 2 diabetes.

- The **World Equestrian Games** will take place at the Kentucky Horse Park in September and October of 2010. Tickets for the competition, which includes world championships in eight disciplines, can be purchased online at www.alltechfeigames.com.
- **Rutabaga research** at Michigan State University may turn up a **new source for biofuel**. By inserting an experimental gene into the rutabaga, scientists are attempting to get the vegetable to **store oil rather than starch**. After processing to harvest the oil, the remaining plant material could be used for animal feed. Success in this venture could result in lowering the biofuel demand for corn, soybeans, and other food and feed crops.
- **Corn is 15 times more genetically diverse** than the human genome. A study conducted by the Agricultural Research Service involved assessing more than a million corn plants, and scientists confirmed that **most natural genetic variation in corn can be explained by the influence of numerous genes, each controlling a small effect**. When corn strains are crossed to create a hybrid variety, the resulting plants often show greater vigor than either parent strain. The ARS study may lead to new varieties with improved yield, fertilizer use efficiency, drought tolerance, and ethanol potential.

Wins and Wows

The **Ruidoso Horse Racing Hall of Fame** honored Strawberry Silk, winner of the All American Futurity, with induction. Also inducted were trainer and breeding farm manager Ted Wells, Jr., jockey G.R. Carter, Jr., and The Allred Brothers, an Arizona breeding establishment.

The American Feed Industry Association sponsored the following recent awards:

- **The New Frontiers in Agriculture Award** was given to Dr. Guoyao Wu for his work on protein and amino-acid metabolism in animals.
- **The ASAS Nonruminant Nutrition Research Award** went to Dr. Charles Maxwell for his studies of swine nutrition.
- **The ASAS Ruminant Animal Nutrition Award** was given to Dr. Harvey Freetly, an expert on the nutrition of beef cows and other ruminants.
- **The Poultry Nutrition Research Award** went to poultry expert Dr. Todd J. Applegate.
- Recently inducted into the **American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame** were three horses and three humans. Poco Pine won 46 grand championships at halter and sired many more champions. Rocket Wrangler won 7 of his 13 race starts, was named world champion 2-year-old colt, and sired 762 winners from 1629 foals. Zan Parr Bar was a three-time world champion halter stallion with points in steer roping, reining, and western pleasure. His foals earned 44 world champion titles and 33 reserves. Among human honorees were Bailey Bradley, a trainer who started the All-American Quarter Horse Congress and was instrumental in establishing 4-H horse programs in Ohio; Carol Rose, breeder of 25 world champion cutting horses; and Frank "Scoop" Vessels III, a leading breeder and member of the AQHA Racing Committee. Vessels served as AQHA president in 2004.
- The Animal Health Foundation is proud to announce that Dr. Donald M. Walsh has been inducted into the **2009 International Equine Veterinarian Hall of Fame**. The award was presented at the 6th Annual International Hoof-Care Summit held in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Summit is a gathering of some of the top farriers, equine veterinarians and educators from around the world.
- The newest members of the **Harness Racing Hall of Fame** include Timothy Rooney, president of Yonkers Raceway, and breeders Alan J. Leavitt and Tom Crouch. Leon Zimmerman and John Berry were also inducted for their roles in racetrack communication. Outstanding horses Muscles Yankee, Miss Easy, Big Towner, and Nan's Catch were honored as well.