

FINNISH STANDARDBRED BREEDING PROGRAMME

Definitions of the terminology used:

Studbook	<i>Former basic register of horses. The horse shall be reported for entry in the studbook within 1 month of birth and will be entered in the studbook after identification, no later than by the end of March of the year following the year of birth.</i>
Breeding inspection	<i>Former registration in the studbook. In the breeding inspection, the quality of mares and stallions as breeding stock is assessed, and they are entered in a breeding category. The breeding inspection is carried out on the basis of individual results or those of the horse's progeny.</i>
Identification document	<i>Horse passport (equine passport) or registration certificate that includes the horse's identification data.</i>

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1. Finnish standardbred

Suomen Hippos ry is the breed society, approved in accordance with the European Union's regulations on horse breeding, responsible for maintaining the studbook of Finnish standardbred.

Together with its member organisations, horse breed associations in Finland, Suomen Hippos is in charge of managing standardbreds' identification and registration in the studbook, and organising shows for the purposes of carrying out breeding inspections for horses, and their approval for breeding purposes.

Standardbreds, born in Finland and imported to Finland, that meet the studbook requirements, are entered in the studbook of standardbreds.

The objective of the Finnish standardbred programme is to improve the breed.

The breeding program of the Finnish Standardbred trotter follows the UET's International Agreement on Trotting Races, which serves as the foundation for its operations. The breeding program may also specify and further define these rules.

2. Breed description and breeding objectives of the Finnish standardbred

The bloodlines of a Finnish standardbred can be American, French, Orlov or a cross of these. A standardbred is quick and has high performance capacity. By conformation, it is of a light type, sporty and the height at withers is usually 155 to 165 cm. All colours are permitted. By temperament, horse is easy to handle and willing to win in competitions.

The Finnish standardbred is bred to be a racehorse that is increasingly more suitable for trotting races. The objective is to produce internationally competitive, healthy trotter horses with high performance capacity.

3. Geographical territory of the breeding programme

The geographical scope of the breeding programme is defined on a country-by-country basis. Foals eligible for entry in the studbook of Finnish standardbred horse can be born in EU countries to which the geographical territory of breeding programmes has been extended. Standardbreds born in this geographical territory can be entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred by application of the breeder, provided that the horses meet the requirements of the studbook. In addition, breeding inspections for entry in the studbook of Finnish standardbred can be organised in this geographical territory. The geographical territory of Finnish standardbred breeding programme includes Finland, Sweden, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands and Estonia.

4. Identification of horses and horse passport

The breeding and competitive use of standardbreds require a reliable register that verifies the correctness of the horse's lineage and its identification data and the rights of ownership and possession. Provisions on the standard identification document (equine passport/horse passport) are laid down in the European Commission's Regulation.

A horse passport is issued to a foal, based on the information provided, no later than one year after birth. If the information provided is not sufficient to meet the requirements for entry in the studbook, mentioned in paragraph 5.1, an identification document for a non-registered equine animal will be issued to the foal. If the foal has not been identified within one year of birth, a duplicate identification document shall be issued to it.

Notification of the birth of a foal must be submitted within one month of the date of birth. If the notification is submitted later, a higher registration fee will be charged.

The foal must be identified for the purpose of issuing a horse passport. Persons authorised by Suomen Hippos are responsible for identifying the foal. Identification duties have been delegated to horse breed associations in accordance with the cooperation agreement. The contact information of the persons authorised to conduct identification is available at www.hevosjalostusliitot.fi.

The identification document must always accompany the horse. To replace a lost or destroyed identification document, Suomen Hippos will issue a duplicate upon application, after a reliable explanation of the disappearance of the original identification document has been provided and the original identification document has been invalidated. The issuing of a duplicate identification document will exclude the horse from slaughter in accordance with the Commission Regulation.

5. Studbook of the Finnish standardbred

The studbook provides a reliable basis for breeding and competition activities to safeguard the rights of breeders and horse owners.

The studbook of the Finnish standardbred consists of a main section that is divided into main basic class and breeding class.

Provisions on the right of individuals entered in the studbook of the Finnish standardbred to participate in trotting races and the right to breeding subsidies are laid down in section 5.2.

Basic class

Offspring born to a mare entered in the studbook of the Finnish standardbred, born in Finland or abroad, are eligible for entry in the basic class, if they meet the requirements laid down in paragraph 5.1. On application, horses entered in a foreign studbook may also be entered in the basic class of the studbook of the Finnish standardbred, if they meet the requirements for entry in the studbook specified for a horse imported to Finland.

Breeding class

On the basis of a breeding inspection, horses entered in the basic class of the studbook may be entered in the breeding class. Horses are entered in the breeding class on the basis of their bloodlines, performances and other characteristics judged. More detailed requirements are listed in paragraph 7.

5.1. Entry in the studbook

An individual entered in the studbook of the Finnish standardbred must meet the statutory requirements of identification, in accordance with paragraph 4, and the criteria for entry in the studbook, listed below. An individual, to whom an identification document for a non-registered equine animal has been issued, can be registered in the studbook later on the basis of information on its breed and lineage, provided that the animal meets the requirements for entry in the studbook.

The identification data and lineage of horses are stored in a database maintained by Suomen Hippos. Horses are entered in the studbook with a unique UELN number.

Suomen Hippos is not responsible for any mistakes committed by other parties in the identification or lineage of horses entered in the studbook.

Requirements for entry in the studbook

Individuals that meet the following requirements can be entered in the studbook of the Finnish standardbred on application:

- individuals that are descendants of parents entered in the main section of the studbook of the Finnish standardbred at the time of the foal's birth, or
- are descendants of a dam entered in the main section of the studbook of the Finnish standardbred at the time of the foal's birth and a sire who is a stallion entered in the main or supplementary section of the studbook of a foreign standardbred, and
- have been identified in accordance with the rules of the studbook, paragraph 4. and
- whose pedigree has been established, and
- whose sire has a stallion license redeemed for the year of mating, except for mares inseminated abroad, for which the stallion used for breeding has been approved for breeding in the country in question in accordance with the rules of that country, and
- for whom the birth certificate has been redeemed from the keeper of the stallion

Horses imported to Finland from a foreign studbook

On application, horses entered in a foreign studbook may also be entered in the basic class of the studbook of the Finnish standardbred, if they meet the requirements for entry in the studbook specified for a horse imported to Finland in accordance with paragraph 5.2.

Horses previously entered in a standardbred studbook in the following UET countries may be accepted for entry in the studbook of the Finnish standardbred: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. In addition: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States.

Reporting of mating and foaling

The matings of Finnish standardbred must be recorded by 15 September of the mating year. Matings can be reported after the annual stallion licence has been activated for the stallion. A fee will be charged for

the processing of matings reported later. If the keeper of the stallion has not activated the stallion licence, it can be done when registering the foal.

A standardbred foal must be reported for registration in the studbook within one month of the date of birth. If the notification is submitted later, a higher registration fee will be charged. The owner of the mare at the time of foaling, or the entity to which the transfer of the mare's right of possession has been entered in the breeder register at the time of the foaling, shall be recorded as the foal's breeder. The transfer of the right of possession in the breeder register will not be done after the foal has been born.

Foal born abroad

A standardbred foal born abroad, not registered in the studbook of another country, may be entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred if the foal meets the requirements for entry in the studbook. The transfer of the right of possession in the breeder register will not be done after the foal has been born.

Parentage verification

The parentage of an individual entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred must be verified with a DNA analysis to both the sire and dam. A DNA sample of an individual entered at a later date in the studbook of Finnish standardbred will be analysed. Persons authorised by Suomen Hippos are entitled to take a DNA sample for the purpose of parentage verification. A confirmed fee will be charged for the parentage verification. The DNA sample taken for parentage verification may be used for research purposes with the permission of Suomen Hippos.

Naming a foal

Horse names which are inappropriate, cause confusion with names already entered in the studbook, or names that are officially protected breeder names will not be entered in the studbook. More detailed requirements for naming a standardbred are set out in the separate name code of Suomen Hippos. If no acceptable name proposal is provided for the horse, Suomen Hippos has the right to name the horse. The name of the horse entered in the studbook may be changed with the consent of the breeder before the horse's first participation in events organised or supervised by Suomen Hippos, unless the name has previously been entered in another studbook.

5.2. The right of a standardbred, entered in the studbook, to compete in trotting races

The rules relating to the rights of standardbreds to compete in trotting races are laid down in the trotting race rules and regulations of Suomen Hippos and in the International Agreement on Trotting Races of UET.

An individual registered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred can be entered in the competition register of Suomen Hippos if it has the right to compete in trotting races.

The definitions and requirements relating to the issuing of the right to compete in trotting races are enclosed herein.

Definitions:

A standardbred born in Finland (FI):

- is born in Finland to a mare entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred and entered in the studbook in Finland, and identified in Finland by the end of March following the year of birth in accordance with the rules of the studbook, or
- is born abroad to a mare entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred and imported to Finland by 31 December of the year of birth, and is not entered in the studbook of any other country and whose identity has been verified in Finland by the end of March following the year of birth in accordance with the rules of the studbook.
- has a birth certificate redeemed from the stallion keeper by the last day of December of the year of birth at the latest.

A standardbred not born in Finland (FIU):

- is born to a mare entered in an approved (paragraph 5.1.) foreign studbook
- is imported in the year of birth and entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred together with its dam (the dam's export certificate must have arrived at Suomen Hippos by the end of the year of birth of the foal) and is not entered in a foreign studbook, or
- is born abroad to a mare entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred and has been imported to Finland by the end of March following the year of birth, and is not entered in the studbook of any other country.
- the horse's identity has been verified in Finland by the end of March following the year of birth in accordance with the rules of the studbook.
- has a birth certificate redeemed from the stallion keeper by the last day of December of the year of birth at the latest.

FIU horses are not entitled to breeding subsidies and prizes or to participate in race starts limited to trotter horses born in Finland.

A standardbred imported to Finland:

- is entered in an approved (paragraph 5.1.) foreign studbook and, after importation to Finland, entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred. The nationality of a foreign horse shall be determined according to the studbook in which it is first entered.

The identity of a horse imported to Finland must be verified in Finland within one month of importation. A DNA sample is taken from the horse in connection with the verification. The original identification document of the horse (horse passport or registration certificate) must be submitted, together with the identification data, to Suomen Hippos for entry in the studbook. The horse will be entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred when the breeding certificate issued by the keeper of the studbook of the country of origin, and the export certificate have arrived at Suomen Hippos.

A standardbred imported to Finland must have the right to compete in trotting races in its exporting country at the time of entry in the studbook, in order to obtain the right to compete in trotting races in Finland.

A standardbred imported to Finland must be free from contagious diseases in accordance with the animal disease requirements issued by the authorities.

Entry in the Competition Register

The breeder applies for the right to compete in trotting races for his/her foal when entering the foal in the studbook and at the same time, undertakes to comply with the breeding regulations of the Finnish standardbred and Suomen Hippos rules for trotting races, available at www.hippos.fi. If the breeder does not apply for the right to compete in trotting races for his/her foal at the time of registration in the studbook, or the owner of the horse removes the horse's right to compete in trotting races after registration in the studbook, the right to compete cannot be applied for afterwards.

Other terms and conditions for entry in the Competition Register

Only descendants of mares mated in Finland, whose sire is entered in the breeding class of the studbook at the time of the mare's mating, can be entered in the Competition Register. By way of derogation from the above, the right to compete in trotting races will also be granted to the progeny of stallions not entered in the breeding class of the studbook (=without breeding inspection) that are born to mares owned by the owner of the stallion in question from the time of mating until the time of foaling. The owner or owners of the stallion and the owner or owners of the mare shall be the same person or persons. The stallion and mare must be in the ownership and possession of the same person or entity or the same persons in all registers from the time of mating to the time of foaling. The ownership rights of the horses must be 100% identical. Family members are also considered as the same owner in the following cases: married spouses, cohabiting couples living in the same household, joint ownership of parents and children, and joint ownership of underage siblings. It must be possible to verify the family relationship.

If the mare is mated abroad (the accepted countries listed in section 5.1.), the stud stallion must have a licence for use as stud in its home country in order for the foal to have the right to compete in trotting races.

The offspring of the first 150 mares on the mating list of a standardbred stallion are entitled to have the right to compete in trotting races. The offspring of mares mated after the 150th mating are not entitled to have the right to compete in trotting races, regardless of how many foals have been born to the first 150 mares mated. Inseminations of mares, registered abroad, with exported semen, are excluded from the quota.

A standardbred foal born outside of Finland must be microchipped in the country of birth with a country-coded microchip from that country, and an identification form must be completed for the horse. Identification performed abroad is subject to separate agreement with Suomen Hippos. Abroad, the microchip must be implanted and the identification form completed by an authorised operator in that country. The identification form shall be delivered to Suomen Hippos, where an identification document will be prepared for the horse based on the information. In order to be entered in the register of standardbreds with FI competition rights, the horse must be imported to Finland by the last day of December of the year of birth. If the foal of a mare entered in the studbook of Finnish standardbred is imported to Finland in the year following birth by the end of March, it can be entered in the Competition Register with FI competition rights.

The identity of a foal entered in the Competition Register of Suomen Hippos, not entered in the studbook of another country, must be verified and a DNA sample taken for parentage verification purposes in Finland

by the end of March following the year of birth. If the foal does not meet the FI or FIU specifications, no right to compete in trotting races will be granted to it.

6. Collection and usage of result data

For the purposes of breeding inspections, data collected on the characteristics of horses in breeding inspection events organised by Suomen Hippos will be utilised. The data on competition results and progeny of horses is available in the database of Suomen Hippos, and in foreign competition databases.

In addition, the BLUP breeding index, calculated for standardbreds on the basis of trotting race results, is used in Finland. The index describes the genetic standard of horses. The BLUP index stands for Best Linear Unbiased Prediction.

All available information on the bloodlines, performance and offspring of the horse is taken into account in the calculation of the indices. In addition, environmental factors that have been verified by research as having an impact on the results are taken into account in the calculation. The environmental factors taken into account in the calculation of the indices include gender, age, driver, starting racetrack and method of starting, and individual start.

The Finnish BLUP index consists of sub-indices that make up the total index. In the total index, the weights are 40% time difference, 25% amount of winnings, 25% arrival at start and 10% best time of the year.

In addition to the indices, the reliability of breeding value is given in the result. It indicates how reliably the prediction describes the actual breeding value of the horse. The highest possible figure is 1, or 100%. The number of results of the horse itself and its offspring influence the reliability of breeding value.

7. Breeding inspection of Finnish standardbred

A horse entered in the basic class of the studbook may be transferred to the breeding class, provided that it meets the specified requirements. The performance and other characteristics of a horse to be entered in the breeding class are assessed at a breeding inspection event. The most important characteristics in the breeding of a standardbred are trotting speed, endurance and the will to win.

Breeding inspection criteria

The breeding value of a horse is assessed on the basis of individual judging or progeny data. Breeding indices are calculated for horses on the basis of trotting race results: the results of its parents, its own results and the results of its offspring, paragraph 6.

The prerequisite for accepting a horse in the breeding class is that it is suitable for breeding in terms of its performance, temperament, movement, conformation and health.

The individual judging includes measurement, conformation review, performance tests (optional for mares and stallions to be assessed for offspring), assessment of temperament and for stallions, a veterinary inspection and point group analysis of the stallion's bloodlines and performances. A stallion may be exempted from the mandatory performance test for a highly compelling reason on the basis of a veterinary certificate. The progeny evaluation is carried out on the basis of the competition results of the horse's offspring.

A horse that has passed or failed the breeding inspection can be shown again for breeding inspection. The number of inspections is not limited.

General requirements for breeding inspection

Stallions aged 2 years and older, and mares aged 3 years and older, are entitled to participate in the breeding inspection. More detailed requirements for stallions' participation in the breeding inspection are listed in paragraph 7.1, and for mares, in paragraph 7.2.

Welfare as the starting point for breeding inspection

The basis for the breeding inspection event of horses is the welfare of horses (Animal Welfare Act). A sick horse is not entitled to participate in a breeding inspection. At the breeding inspection event, the attending veterinarian or the chairman of the board may interrupt the performance of a horse on the basis of the horse's welfare. Horses with defects that may seriously endanger the health and welfare of the horses themselves or their offspring, cannot be approved for breeding (paragraph 7.5.).

On the basis of weakened characteristics of conformation or health, the prize for the horse can be lowered or no prize given to the horse, in accordance with paragraph 7.5. If an adverse hereditary defect or illness is detected in the progeny of a horse entered in the breeding class, the Breeding Committee of Suomen Hippos may exclude the horse from use in breeding (paragraph 7.5.). In some cases, a stallion may be declared free from genes that cause hereditary defects on the basis of a progeny evaluation or a genetic test.

7.1. Measurement of the horse, judging of temperament, movement and conformation

The judging scale for points given for the temperament, movement and conformation of the horse is from 4 to 10. In the judging, 10 means commendable, 9 very good, 8 good, 7 rather good, 6 satisfactory, 5 passable and 4 very weak.

Dimensions

In the breeding inspection, the following measurements of the horse will be taken: height at withers, height at hindquarters, body length, chest width, chest circumference and cannon bone circumference. In addition, the condition class of the horse is determined by points from one to five, where 1 corresponds to the definition of very thin, 2 to thin, 3 to normal, 4 to slightly obese and 5 to obese. In addition, a + or - sign may be used to specify the score.

In the breeding inspection, the horse must be presented without insoles or shoes that cover the sole of the hoof. For the measurement and judging of the hooves, the horse shall be presented wearing the shoes in which the horse will perform the performance tests. According to measurement, heel caulks and shoes will be deducted from the result of the height measurement.

Judging of temperament

To judge the temperament, board members observe the horse throughout the show. The temperament of horses presented for individual judging is mainly judged in connection with the driving test.

To judge the temperament and movement of the horse, two members of the board will each drive the horse separately. The driving test can also be performed by a person appointed as the board's assistant. The judges drive the horse over a sufficient distance, both at a walk and at a trot, to review the alertness, flexibility and calmness of the horse's temperament, as well as the horse's willingness to cooperate. Driving is performed in moderation, taking into account the age and health of the horse.

The temperament of the horse is judged both verbally and with scores from four to ten (4–10). The driving test is optional for mares and stallions judged on the basis of their progeny. Aggressiveness, restlessness and timidity may cause the horse to be disqualified. The horse will be disqualified if it cannot be judged due to its temperament.

Judging of movement

The horse's mechanics of motion are judged in connection with the driving test for individually judged horses. Attention is paid to gait style and a balanced trot. For mares and stallions judged on the basis of their progeny, the driving test is optional. Otherwise, the horse can only be exempted from the driving test for compelling reasons on the basis of a veterinary certificate. The trotting movements are judged both verbally and with scores from four to ten (4–10).

Judging of conformation

The judging of conformation of a horse comprises the type (quality type, breed type and sex type), body, positions of feet and legs and the regularity of movement, feet and leg health and endurance, as well as hooves. The points for conformation range from four to ten (4–10).

A verbal statement is prepared on the conformation characteristics and, in addition, the separately mentioned points will be scored. Stallions are scored for quality type, body, positions of feet and legs and the regularity of movement, feet and leg health and hooves. Mares are scored for quality type, body, positions of feet and legs and the regularity of movement, and hooves.

When assessing the regularity of movement, faults that impair the working value of the horse are taken into account, including toe-in motion, dishing, brushing and closeness of gait.

Veterinary inspection of stallions

In connection with the show entry, the owner or holder of the stallion completes, and verifies with his/ her signature, an entry form that includes a report on the surgeries performed on the stallion and any illnesses or behavioural disorders. The issues notified can be recorded in the critique issued to the stallion. When entering the stallion, the owner or holder at the same time agrees to that the veterinarian who treated the stallion may, upon request, disclose to Suomen Hippos any medical and treatment information concerning diseases and injuries that should be taken into account in the breeding inspection.

In the inspection of stallions, attention is paid to the overall condition and behaviour of the horse. In particular, the state of health of the musculoskeletal system, genitals, skin and teeth is examined. The stallion will not be sedated for the inspection. The neurological condition is also taken into account. If necessary, the horse may be referred to further examinations, such as an endoscopy, rectal or eye examination.

The veterinary inspection includes checking of both overall health and orthopaedic health. At the same time, the horse's movements are inspected over a straight track on a hard surface, when the horse walks and trots. The veterinarian gives a verbal statement of the health status of the stallion and scores the health of feet and legs on a scale of 0 to 7.

The stallion's legs are X-rayed to find any hereditary growth disorders and other findings. In connection with the X-ray examination, the stallion's teeth and bite are also inspected.

The examinations must be carried out by the deadline set by Suomen Hippos. The show veterinarian of Suomen Hippos will give a statement on the X-rays and issue scores on the scale 0–3. The X-ray statement and the oral and dental examination statement shall be attached to the breeding inspection critique.

More detailed definitions of the conformation and health characteristics of the breeding inspection are listed in paragraph 7.5.

7.2. Judging of stallions

The breeding inspection of standardbreds uses a product information model assessing the horses' bloodlines, performances, state of health and overall assessment, as well as temperament, movements and conformation. The stallions are entered in breeding classes on the basis of the total points given in the breeding inspection.

A prerequisite for the approval of a stallion in the breeding class is that it has not previously been withdrawn from stud use in another country on the basis of defects in conformation, or due to reasons relating to animal welfare.

Based on the total score, the stallion is classified in the following breeding class prize categories:

I Very high predicted breeding value 86–100 points

II High predicted breeding value 71–85 points

III Average predicted breeding value 56–70 points

IV Low predicted breeding value 41–55 points

V Very low predicted breeding value 0–40 points

The total score of stallions is formed as follows: bloodlines 40, performances 60. Health and conformation characteristics are assessed verbally.

The scoring can be performed either in Finland or abroad, in accordance with the policy of Suomen Hippos.

A stallion can also be approved for inclusion in a breeding class on the basis of the results of its progeny. In order to participate in progeny evaluation, a stallion must have at least 50 offspring in competitive age. In the progeny evaluation of stallions' breeding inspection, the stallion's bloodlines, performances, health and conformation are assessed. All information obtained about the stallion's offspring are taken into account in the evaluation. In the progeny evaluation, a verbal summary of the results of the offspring and the stallion's breeding value is presented. Stallions with a progeny evaluation are not entered in prize categories.

7.3. Judging of mares

In the breeding inspection, the horses' bloodlines, performances, state of health and overall assessment, as well as temperament, movements and conformation are judged.

The mare's lineage is presented verbally and the competitive achievements are presented as an annual and competitive career specific summary, both numerically and verbally. In the breeding inspection, the mare is measured and judged in terms of temperament, movement, conformation and health.

In the individual judgment, the mare can be entered, on the basis of performances, in breeding class prize category B or C. The classification takes into account the trotting race results achieved by the mare at various ages and throughout its competitive career, and the results of the overall evaluation. If the mare does not have any results from competitions or these results are not sufficient to qualify for a breeding class prize category, the mare can be approved in the breeding inspection without a prize.

A mare may also participate in the breeding inspection on the basis of the results of its offspring, in which case it must meet the minimum requirements for breeding class prize categories A or AB.

Suomen Hippos Breeding Committee will review the classification of mares if this is required by an improvement in their performance.

The precondition for the inclusion of a mare in the breeding class is that:

1. the mare is entered in the studbook
2. the mare is at least 3 years old
3. the mare is suitable as a breeding horse in terms of temperament, movement, conformation and health (paragraph 7). In order to combat hereditary defects and illnesses, the horse must meet the requirements for conformation and health specified by the Breeding Committee of Suomen Hippos.
4. the mare gets at least 5 points for each judged item
5. for the purpose of prizing, the mare has achieved the approved time in trotting races over a distance of at least 1,600 m, calculated per kilometre as follows

At age 3, 1.19.0 or better

At age 4, 1.18.0 or better

At age over 4, 1.17.0 or better

6. if the mare does not have results from competition that are sufficient to qualify for a prize, it may be approved in the breeding inspection without a prize if it meets the other requirements set.

A mare approved in a breeding inspection may be entered in the breeding class prize category under the following conditions:

Category C: the same as the prize requirements in breeding inspection, paragraph 5.

Category B: the mare's record is 1.14.5 or better and the sum of winnings is at least 12,000 euros or the sum of winnings amount per start is at least 200 euros.

A mare who is demonstrably pregnant from a mating carried out at least 120 days previously, has foaled a live foal no more than 150 days previously or whose foal has died no more than 90 days before, if the pregnancy has lasted at least 120 days, is not entitled to take part in the performance test of the breeding inspection. However, a mare to be judged without a driving test may be shown in the breeding inspection without respecting the aforementioned time limits.

7.4. Progeny evaluation

In addition to individual judging, a standardbred can undergo breeding inspection by being judged directly in a progeny evaluation based on the results of the individual's offspring. The progeny evaluation can also be performed afterwards for horses entered through individual judging in breeding class. The competition results of the offspring of mares entered in the breeding class are reviewed annually with regard to the progeny evaluation.

In order to participate in progeny evaluation, a stallion must have at least 50 offspring in competitive age. At the breeding inspection event, the horse judged on the basis of its offspring is subjected to analysis of the bloodlines and performance, measurement, evaluation of movements and conformation, and a health check. Progeny data for the stallion is presented and a verbal statement given on the stallion's genetic performance. The driving test is optional. In addition, breeding indices calculated on the basis of the individual's own and its parents' and offspring' trotting race results, paragraph 6, are utilised in the progeny evaluation.

A mare may also participate in the breeding inspection on the basis of the results of its offspring, in which case it must meet the minimum requirements for breeding class prize categories A or AB (below). At the breeding inspection event, the mare judged on the basis of its offspring is subjected to analysis of the bloodlines and performance, measurement, evaluation of movements and conformation, and a health check. A mare entered in breeding class on the basis of individual judging can be transferred later to breeding class prize categories on the basis of the results of its offspring.

Class AB: the mare has at least 4 offspring, one with a record of 1.14.0 or better, and two with 1.17.0 or better.

Class A: the mare has at least 5 offspring, one of which has a record of 1.14.0 or better and one 1.15.0 or better, and two 1.18.0 or better, plus the total amount of winnings of its progeny is at least €60,000.

If an adverse hereditary defect or illness is detected in the progeny of a horse entered in the breeding class, the Breeding Committee of Suomen Hippos may exclude the horse from use in breeding (paragraph 7.5.).

7.5. Conformation and health requirements in connection with the breeding inspection

No horse with a confirmed contagious disease or symptoms suggestive of a contagious disease may be brought to the show venue. When the horse is ill (e.g. suffers from chronic severe lameness or respiratory diseases) or is in very substandard condition, it must not be shown. In such cases, the horse may, at the discretion of the board, not be judged on the basis of animal welfare reasons.

At stallion shows, a veterinarian appointed by Suomen Hippos ry is always present to inspect the stallions at the show venue. At mare and foal shows, the board of the show does not normally include a veterinarian. If necessary, a veterinarian may assist the board.

A horse may be disqualified due to health and animal welfare issues and hereditary defects.

7.5.1. Drug testing

Suomen Hippos ry's regulations for trotting races are complied with at stallion and mare shows with regard to drug residues. The control is carried out by random testing at show venues. If the horse is on medication prescribed by a veterinarian during the show, the show veterinarian or chairman of the board must be informed of this before the show. On the basis of case-by-case consideration and a veterinary certificate, the horse may be granted permission to participate in the show even under medication. If the medication may affect the performance or behaviour of the horse, no permit will be granted.

7.5.2. Testicles

Stallions entered in the breeding class of the studbook of Finnish standardbred are required to undergo a fertility test carried out in the summer after the show. Fertility testing is not required for stallions not having undergone a breeding inspection, or stallions whose semen has been imported.

Various testicular abnormalities include inguinal hernia, cryptorchidism, testicular torsion, the abnormal size or structure of testicles, and orchitis. A veterinary certificate must be presented for the absence of testis in a stallion.

Owners of stallions approved for breeding must notify Suomen Hippos if the stallion undergoes surgery at a later date due to inguinal hernia. In this case, the stallion must undergo a second fertility test.

The foaling rates of stallions are monitored annually. Should reason to do so emerge, the stallion may be referred to fertility testing. The results of fertility tests are public.

7.5.3. Dental abnormalities

The teeth and bite of standardbred stallions are inspected in connection with the X-ray examination before breeding inspection. The bite of mares subject to breeding inspection is inspected during the breeding inspection. Any abnormal findings are recorded in the critique. A horse whose upper and lower front teeth chewing surfaces do come to contact at all can only be accepted in exceptional cases.

If the teeth are missing, a veterinary certificate for the horse may be required for the reasons for the teeth missing. A severe abnormality of bite or dental abnormality may cause the horse to be disqualified.

7.5.4. Behavioural disorders

When entering the horse to the show, the owner or holder of the horse must report on the entry form any behavioural disorders the stallion may have. Severe behavioural disorders (e.g. chewing on wood, swallowing air, weaving, aggressiveness) are recorded in the critique. Severe behavioural disorders may cause the horse to be disqualified. The horse will be disqualified if it cannot be judged due to its temperament.

7.5.5. Developmental disorders in the skeleton

A standardbred stallion diagnosed with osteochondral lesions or other developmental disorders in the joints may be approved for breeding. The abnormalities are reported clearly in the breeding inspection critique and they will lower the scoring of the leg structure.

7.5.6. Genetic testing

A standardbred can be tested with a genetic test or ordered to undergo a genetic test. The test results are public.

8. Use of stallions and mares for breeding purposes

An annual stallion licence must be activated for each stallion used for breeding. Activation of the stallion licence is required also for stallions used for breeding who have not undergone a breeding inspection, and for stallions whose semen has been imported. The inspection of health characteristics for hereditary diseases is also recommended for stallions used for breeding who have not undergone a breeding inspection. Breeding inspection of mares is not mandatory, but an inspection of the mare's health characteristics is also recommended before the mating decision.

8.1. Stallion licence

An annual stallion licence must be activated for each standardbred stallion used for breeding. Applications are submitted to the Heppa system of Suomen Hippos. The stallion licence fee according to a separate price list is determined by whether or not the stallion has undergone breeding inspection, or a stallion whose semen has been imported, and the time when the application can be approved at Hippos, i.e. all necessary appendices to the application have been submitted. If the licence is not paid by the due date, the price will increase according to separately specified price steps.

Stallions entered in the breeding class of the studbook of Finnish standardbred are required to undergo a fertility test carried out in the summer after the show. Fertility testing is not required for stallions not having undergone a breeding inspection, or stallions whose semen has been imported. More detailed requirements for stallions whose semen has been imported are listed in paragraph 8.2.

The electronic mating records will open when the stallion licence is activated. The offspring of a stallion cannot be reported as having been born, and the foal cannot be entered in the studbook, if the stallion licence has not been activated. If the keeper of the stallion has not activated the stallion licence, it can be done when registering the foal. A breeding inspection of the stallion performed later will not influence offspring that have already been born.

8.2. Use of stallions whose semen has been imported

The precondition for the approval of a foreign standardbred stallion for breeding in Finland, using fresh and frozen semen, is that the stallion's data is checked by the Breeding Committee of Suomen Hippos and the stallion has been approved for breeding in its home country in accordance with the rules of that country.

The application for inspection and approval for a foreign stallion whose semen has been imported for breeding in Finland must be submitted to Suomen Hippos by the deadline. For stallions whose semen has been imported, a power of attorney by the stallion's foreign representative must be submitted to a Finnish stallion station or a person responsible for the use of the stallion in Finland. In addition, notification must be given of the stallion station responsible for stud use of the stallion and mating records in Finland. Stallions owned by a syndicate are an exception to the requirement concerning a stallion station, as in that case, the applicant may use his/her own stallion in accordance with the shareholders' list of the syndicate. The annually confirmed stallion licence must be paid for the stallion. DNA data of the stallion must be submitted to the laboratory if the data has not previously been available for use by the laboratory.

8.3. Use of semen from a deceased or castrated stallion

Frozen semen from a deceased stallion may be used during the year following the year of death. Frozen semen from a castrated stallion may be used during the year following the year of castration.

8.4. Semen collection and storage centres

An application for a licence for horse semen collection and storage centre must be submitted to the Regional State Administrative Agency. The Finnish Food Authority confirms the licence by issuing a national approval code. Licencing requires the centre to have appropriate semen collection and processing facilities, insemination facilities and adequate stable and paddock facilities. For the licence application, a veterinarian shall be appointed to be responsible for ensuring compliance at the centre with the requirements set. The licencing requirements are defined in the Animal Diseases Act.

8.5. Contagious diseases

In accordance with legislation on artificial insemination legislation, all stallions used for breeding by way or artificial insemination must undergo annual testing for *Taylorella equigenitalis* (CEM) and viral arthritis (EVA). The stallion must be tested negative for CEM before the first insemination of the next breeding season. If the stallion has not been used for breeding at all after the previous CEM test, the test need not be repeated. If a stallion entered in a breeding class is used at stud only by natural mating, the CEM test shall be taken at least at 5-year intervals. The CEM test requirement does not apply to basic class stallions used at stud only by the natural method.

Prior to semen collection, the veterinarian supervising the semen collection procedure must check that the stallion shows no signs of a contagious disease. In case the semen is frozen, the stallion must also be tested negative for contagious diseases (CEM, EVA). Separate regulations and guidelines have been issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on the handling, quality standards and export of equine gametes and embryos to another Member State of the European Union (www.mmm.fi)

Legislation on animal diseases and the related amendments are taken into account in these guidelines. Instructions or regulations may also be issued for other diseases transmitted by mating or artificial insemination, where appropriate.

If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a stallion is transmitting a contagious disease in connection with mating, the stallion may, if necessary, be referred to further testing and a temporary ban on its use for breeding can be imposed.

8.6. Import and export of semen

Separate regulations and guidelines have been issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on the handling, quality standards and export of equine gametes and embryos to another Member State of the European Union.

The import of equine gamete and embryos must comply with the decisions and regulations issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on requirements relating to animal diseases.

9. Embryo transfer

Embryo transfer complies with the requirements set by the EU and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. License holders must notify donor mares annually to Suomen Hippos ry before the first embryo collection.

The breeder of a foal born by the embryo transfer method is the owner of the donor mare at the time of the foal's birth, unless the holder of the donor mare has been or has been declared as the breeder in the breeder register of Suomen Hippos.

Each recipient mare shall be recorded as a bred mare in the stallion's breeding register.

Only one foal per mare per year may be entered in the studbook of the Finnish Standardbred trotter, except for twins. Any other offspring born to the mare in the same year shall not be entered in the studbook and shall not be granted the right to compete in trotting races. Within the time limits concerning eligibility to race, the donor mare is equated with the recipient mare regarding both pregnancy and foaling (Rules of Harness Racing, Section 19).

Foals born from frozen embryos or produced using OPU/ICSI reproductive technology shall not be entered in the studbook and shall not be granted the right to compete in trotting races.

10. Breeding Committee and show judging board

The Breeding Committee appointed by the Board of Directors of Suomen Hippos comprises at least three representatives of breeders, one of whom has been elected chairman. In addition, the Committee comprises an expert in the science of animal breeding, a veterinary science expert, an official representing the horse breeding associations and an official of Suomen Hippos.

The Board of Directors of Suomen Hippos confirms the composition of the Stallion Board and appoints a Chairman. The Board may be assisted by persons appointed by Suomen Hippos and the relevant horse breeding association. If one of the members of the Stallion Inspection Board is prevented or disqualified, Suomen Hippos will appoint a replacement.

The Chairman of the Mare Inspection Board is a president judge appointed by Suomen Hippos, and board members are two competent and qualified persons selected by the local horse breeding association. The Board may be assisted by persons appointed by the horse breeding association.

A member of the Inspection Board shall be disqualified if:

- the member or his/her close relative is the breeder or owner, part-owner, trainer, driver or rider of the horse to be inspected,
- the member or his/her close relative has been the owner or part-owner of the horse to be inspected,
- the member or his/her close relative is the breeder, owner, partial owner, renter or stallion keeper of the sire or dam of the horse in question,
- or if another similar disqualification criterion arises which jeopardises confidence in a member's impartiality for any other reason.

The members of the Inspection Board are responsible for reporting the disqualification themselves. Parents, married spouses and cohabiting partners, children and siblings are considered close relatives.

If the votes are tied when the Inspection Board votes, the chairman's vote shall decide.

11. Code of Conduct

All breeders and owners have an equitable right to enter their horses, that meet the requirements of the studbook, for inclusion in the breeding programme. The breeders and owners of horses participating in the breeding programme undertake to comply with the rules of the breeding programme regarding identification, registration and breeding activities. Breeders commit to the rules of the breeding programme through a breeder's commitment when a foal is entered for inclusion in the studbook.

Breeding inspection results are public. The result of a breeding inspection can be appealed if the inspection event has not been conducted in accordance with the breeding regulations in force for the breed, and other relevant instructions. The complaint may be lodged by the person who owns or controls the individual involved in the complaint in question. The appeal must be submitted in writing. Appeals are processed by the Breeding Committee of Suomen Hippos ry. Complaints related to the inspection site and event must be submitted during the inspection event, no later than half an hour after the event has ended, to the show office. Other complaints related to the inspection event must be submitted within two weeks of the inspection event to Suomen Hippos.

Appeals against the decisions of the Breeding Committee can be lodged with the Board of Directors of Suomen Hippos. Appeals concerning a fine of EUR 1,000 or higher, related to breeding activities and imposed by the Board of Directors of Suomen Hippos, can be submitted to the trotting court within fourteen (14) days of the appellant being informed of the Board's decision.