



2026 ANNUAL REPORT to the General Assembly

Dublin (Ireland)

WBFSH Department of Breeding
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This report consists of:

- 1. Introduction**
 - 2. Objectives**
 - 3. Key Projects**
 - 4. Conclusion**
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1. Introduction

The WBFSH Department of Breeding, led by Vice President Armand Pette (France) and Executive Director Bérengère Lacroix (France), leads initiatives for breeding development and to safeguard the industry through use of “Good Breeding Practice”, which gives the opportunity to share knowledge and to recognise excellence in the WBFSH member studbooks.

2. Objectives – From Commitments to Practical Implementation

In 2026, the WBFSH Breeding Department concentrated on translating the commitments developed in 2025 into practical frameworks for member studbooks. Its work focused on implementing the Equine Welfare Charter and following ongoing welfare research, as well as improving cross-border traceability of stallion use and resulting offspring.

3. Key Projects

3.1. EQUINE WELFARE CHARTER AND ONGOING RESEARCH

Following the adoption and ceremonial signing of the Charter at the 2025 General Assembly in South Africa, the Department maintained equine welfare as an area of follow-up and consultation in 2026. This work provided an opportunity to recall that the structure and content of the Charter signed in 2025 remain unchanged and continue to form the common framework adopted by WBFSH members. The 2026 work therefore focused on supporting its practical implementation by member studbooks, within their respective roles and applicable national legal frameworks. The Department also followed and contributed to consultations on the second phase of the ongoing Hartpury study. This phase is establishing a baseline across assisted reproductive technologies, covering current practices, governance, welfare monitoring and available data. It will inform later interviews and more detailed investigations into welfare challenges, impacts and mitigation. The Department's role is to follow the work and help ensure that its findings can support evidence-based and practical implementation by member studbooks.



3.2. TRACEABILITY OF STALLION USE & RESULTING OFFSPRING

The Department contributed to ongoing discussions and to the preparation of a draft position statement covering authorised stallion use through natural service, fresh, chilled and frozen semen, embryo transfer, ICSI and other uses of stallion genetic material. The draft aims to maintain a reliable link between authorised use and registered offspring, especially when semen or embryos cross national or studbook borders. The discussions have examined the respective roles of stallion owners, representatives and studbooks, the exchange of information for zootechnical and parentage purposes, compliance with data-protection rules, and the need to remain separate from private commercial disputes. Two areas have been identified for further consideration: verifying the authority of any person requesting information, and maintaining traceability for stored semen, embryos and genetic material when ownership or rights change. The proposed approach recognises the diversity of existing systems and promotes the sharing of proven studbook practices rather than a single administrative model. The draft remains under discussion and may continue to evolve before any formal adoption.

4. Conclusion

During 2026, the Breeding Department moved from statements of principle towards practical and legally workable implementation. The next priorities are to continue developing the draft traceability guidance, pursue the consultation and follow-up of welfare research, and support exchanges of good practice among member studbooks. The Breeding Department also works in close collaboration with the other WBFSH departments to ensure that technical breeding matters are reflected consistently in the Federation's external relations and communication.