



RACING AUSTRALIA LAUNCH NATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO STIMULATE DEMAND FOR RETIRED THOROUGHBREDS

Racing Australia, with funding from AgriFutures Australia, is proud to announce a landmark national research initiative to assess demand for retired Thoroughbreds and inform the development of a comprehensive strategy supporting their transition into second careers and long-term homes.

This collaborative initiative reflects the Thoroughbred industry's commitment to whole-of-life care for Thoroughbreds, ensuring horses are supported well beyond their time on the track. The research will explore the existing landscape and future opportunities for rehoming retired Thoroughbreds, drawing on insights from across the equestrian, recreational, agricultural, and therapeutic sectors.

Key objectives of the project include:

- Assess current and projected demand for retired Thoroughbreds across Australia.
- Identify key industries, disciplines, and communities that engage with ex-racehorses.
- Analyse the supply-demand balance and potential barriers to successful rehoming.
- Engage with stakeholders nationwide to inform evidence-based solutions.
- Lead to the development of a **National Thoroughbred Aftercare Demand Strategy**.

The project is supported by a diverse group of partners combining scientific expertise with practical experience. The project is led by Dr Natasha Hamilton from the Equine Genetics Research Centre. Contributors include academic specialists from Hartpury University in the UK and the University of Sydney as well as independent welfare experts and representatives from the Principal Racing Authorities within each state. An industry steering committee will provide guidance to ensure the outcomes are both effective and practical. This interdisciplinary collaboration will ensure the strategy is grounded in rigorous research and informed by real-world application.

“This research represents a significant step forward in our understanding of the post-racing landscape for Thoroughbreds,” said Dr. Hamilton. **“By taking a holistic view of demand, we can better align industry efforts, resources, and retraining initiatives to improve outcomes for retired Thoroughbreds across the country.”**

AgriFutures Thoroughbred Horses Program Manager Caitlin Smith added: **“Our rural industries have long recognised the value of Thoroughbreds beyond racing and breeding. This project not only reinforces their role in regional and rural Australia, but also lays the foundation for a coordinated, strategic approach to Thoroughbred aftercare which is vital for the sustainability of the industry.”**

“Our program of research supports investment across four priority areas. One of these priorities is Thoroughbred horse welfare, workforce safety, and environmental sustainability - and that’s exactly where this project fits in.”

The research will incorporate national surveys, stakeholder interviews, and in-depth data analysis to build a robust understanding of market trends and community needs. The resulting National Strategy will help guide industry investment, policy development, education programs and stakeholder collaboration.

The National Strategy will ultimately support, inform and complement the work already being done by the individual Principal Racing Authorities.

The National Strategy is expected to be released in early 2026.

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About Racing Australia

Racing Australia is the peak body for Thoroughbred racing and in Australia including the management of the Australian Stud Book. Racing Australia is responsible for the operation of the information services business to service the Australian Thoroughbred racing industry and other users of horse Racing Materials.

Racing Australia is committed to advancing equine welfare and traceability throughout and beyond the racing lifecycle.

About AgriFutures Australia

AgriFutures Australia invests in research, innovation and people to strengthen emerging, established, and rural industries. The AgriFutures Thoroughbred Horses Program invests in research, development and extension that supports the sustainability, productivity and competitiveness of the Australian thoroughbred industry. Find out more here: [Thoroughbred Horses | AgriFutures Australia](#)
