

Chronic Progressive Lymphedema

Genetics Research Benefitting Friesians

Chronic Progressive Lymphedema (CPL) is a disorder affecting the lymphatic system in the lower limbs of many draft horse breeds, including Friesians. Clinical presentation begins with minor lymphedema (accumulation of lymph fluid) and skin thickening that frequently goes unnoticed in many animals, especially those with heavy feathering around the legs. As the disease progresses, skin folds, nodules, and skin oozing can be observed, subsequently creating the perfect environment for secondary infections to develop. The combination of these factors often leads to lameness. We propose to identify the region of the horse genome associated with CPL. Additionally, we are interested in looking for physical characteristics and individual management strategies that may be associated with the potential for CPL development.

Participation Requirements:

- Friesian horses with or without chronic progressive lymphedema.
- Horses without CPL must be a minimum of 10 years old.

Procedures:

- Collection of a blood sample for DNA extraction.
- Measurements on several locations of the legs.
- Completion of a survey regarding the exercise, husbandry and management of each horse.

Benefits for Participation:

- Results from this study will improve understanding of CPL in draft horses and could lead to improved management strategies that mitigate disease and slow progression.
- Results from this study may lead to the development of a DNA based test that will allow breeders to make informed breeding decisions.



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