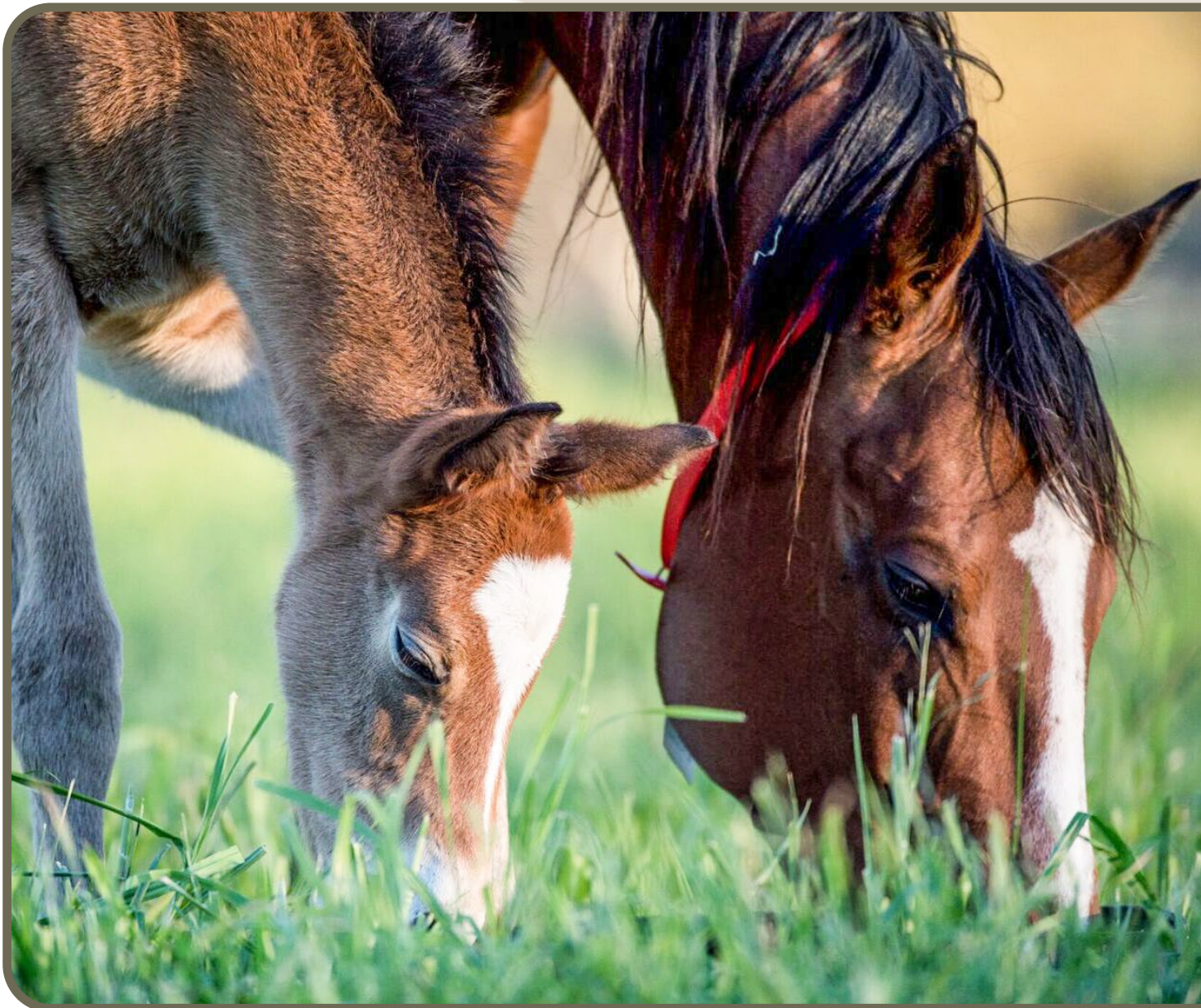


LEARNING AREA: DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES

Biosecurity, Welfare, and Ethical Considerations in the Australian Thoroughbred Industry



Biosecurity, Welfare, and Ethical Considerations in the Australian Thoroughbred Industry

The Australian thoroughbred industry is committed to managing biosecurity and animal welfare, ensuring the health and well-being of the horses and humans involved in the sector.

Biosecurity: Preventing the spread of disease

Biosecurity is a key priority in the Australian thoroughbred industry to prevent the spread of diseases that could be harmful to horse populations and pose risks to human health. Common biosecurity practices within the industry include **quarantine**, **vaccinations**, and **strict hygiene measures** such as wearing **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** and **sanitising** footwear.

Quarantine is one of the most effective ways to prevent the introduction or spread of diseases. Horses entering Australia or moving between states or stud farms often undergo quarantine to ensure they are free of contagious parasites or diseases before being integrated with other horses.

Veterinarians and stud farm staff carefully monitor this process to detect any signs of illness early. This is crucial in preventing the spread of **zoonotic** diseases—those that can be transmitted from animals to humans, such as **Hendra virus**. By ensuring that horses are **vaccinated**, the industry not only protects equine health but also reduces the risk of zoonotic disease transmission to humans, including those who work closely with horses.



Hygiene practices also play a significant role in preventing disease. This includes staff wearing Personal Protective Equipment as well as regular cleaning and disinfecting of stables, equipment, and transport vehicles to minimise the risk of both equine and zoonotic diseases. In events where horses gather in large numbers, such as races or sales, organisers implement strict biosecurity protocols to minimise the risk of disease spread. These measures are vital in protecting not only the horses but also the people who interact with them .

Animal welfare in the thoroughbred industry

Animal welfare refers to the well-being of animals, ensuring that they are treated with care and respect and that their physical and mental needs are met. In the Australian thoroughbred industry, animal welfare is a top priority. Strict standards are in place to ensure that horses are well cared for in all aspects of their lives, including housing, nutrition, veterinary care, handling, and transportation. These standards are aligned with the five domains of animal welfare as outlined by the RSPCA.

The five domains of animal welfare are:

1. Nutrition: Ensuring that animals have access to sufficient, balanced, varied, and clean food and water.

In the thoroughbred industry, horses receive carefully managed rations that are tailored to meet their specific needs. This includes high-quality hay, grains, and fresh water to maintain their health and performance. Proper nutrition is important for the overall well-being of these animals.

2. Environment: Providing animals with an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area.

Thoroughbred horses are housed in stables or paddocks that are safe, clean, and well-ventilated, ensuring they have a comfortable space to rest. These environments are designed to reduce stress and provide horses with enough room to move around freely.

3. Health: Ensuring animals are free from pain, injury, and disease.

Regular veterinary check-ups, dental care, and immediate treatment of injuries play an important role in the thoroughbred industry. Advanced technologies such as digital X-rays and ultrasounds are used to detect and address health issues early, ensuring that horses remain healthy and pain-free.



4. Behavioural interactions: Allowing animals to express natural behaviours and providing opportunities for mental stimulation.

Thoroughbred horses are naturally herd animals, and the industry recognises the importance of allowing them to express these natural behaviours. Horses are often housed in paddocks where they can interact with other horses, supporting their social needs. When housed in stables, they are given opportunities for exercise and socialisation, which helps them stay mentally stimulated and content.

5. Mental state: Ensuring animals experience positive mental states and minimising negative experiences like fear and distress.

Horses must be handled with care and respect at all times, avoiding the use of force or intimidation. During transport, whether for races, sales, or other events, horses must be provided with adequate space, ventilation, and opportunities for rest to minimise stress. All individuals involved in handling and transporting thoroughbreds are trained in best practices, to ensure that the welfare of the horses is prioritised at every stage.

Ethical considerations in the thoroughbred industry

One of the industry's major ethical considerations is the care of thoroughbreds after their racing careers end. The industry has made significant progress in this area, with initiatives focused on rehoming and retraining retired racehorses. These initiatives ensure that thoroughbreds have opportunities for second careers in areas such as dressage, eventing, or as recreation horses. These programs are designed to provide thoroughbreds with safe, healthy lives after their racing careers.

Scan the QR code or click on the link to view the **Off the Track: Spring Creek Equine** video (2:19) to observe how retired racehorses are being retrained and rehomed. After viewing the case study, record your answers to the questions in a workbook or digital document.



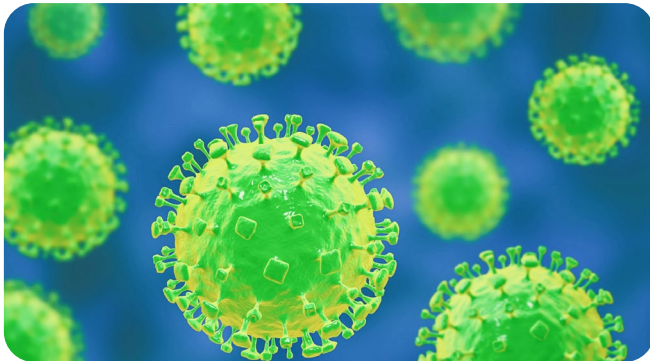
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ie4otN3KZNs>

Biosecurity Research and respond

Click on the links or use the QR codes to access source material focused on biosecurity in the Australian thoroughbred industry. After watching the videos, record your answers to the questions in a workbook or digital document.



1



**Protecting Against
Hendra Virus (4:39)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdpaFwcZzLI>

2



**TBA Learning - Intro
to Quarantine (3:23)**

<https://vimeo.com/802523379>

3



**TBA Learning - PPE:
Donning & Doffing (4:35)**

<https://vimeo.com/802497936>

- a) Explain what the term “zoonotic” means.**
- b) Describe how Hendra virus is a threat to stakeholders in the Australian thoroughbred industry (e.g., horses, industry workers, spectators of racing events, etc.)**
- c) Justify how innovation, technology, and management practices that have been adopted by the thoroughbred industry, help to manage biosecurity threats such as Hendra virus.**

Ethics and welfare in the Thoroughbred Industry Collage activity

d) Create a visual collage that represents the five domains of animal welfare and how they are met in the thoroughbred industry.

Instructions:

1. Collect cut-outs from magazines, print images from Google, or create your own drawings.
2. Arrange the images to visually represent each of the five domains of animal welfare: Nutrition, Environment, Health, Behavioural Interactions, and Mental State.
3. Use labels to identify each domain on your collage. Write a short description (1-2 sentences) under each label explaining how the thoroughbred industry meets that domain.
4. Ensure your collage is clear, colourful, and accurately represents how thoroughbred horses are cared for in each area.
5. Present your collage to a partner, explaining how each image connects to the corresponding domain of animal welfare.



Learning Area | Australian Curriculum Content:

Design and Technologies

Analyse how people in design and technologies occupations consider ethical and sustainability factors to design and produce products, services and environments (AC9TDE8K01)

Analyse how people in design and technologies occupations consider ethical, security and sustainability factors to innovate and improve products, services and environments (AC9TDE10K01)

ATTRIBUTION, CREDIT & SHARING

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