Truman State University Horse Retirement Procedures

The Off to Greener Pastures (OTGP) procedures were developed by Truman State University students as part of an Agriculture Practicum Senior Capstone Project (AGSC 490/491). These procedures were adopted by the Truman State University Business Office on July 1, 2023.

1. Young (or otherwise sound) horses will be sold in one of three ways:

    • in-person, competitive auctions
    • commercial online action platforms
    • on campus sealed bid auctions

    The most appropriate sale alternatives for each horse or group of horses will be selected by the Equine Science faculty member charged with managing the horse herd, in consultation with the Truman State University Comptroller.

2. For retiring horses, or horses that are unsound and require special care or facilities, the horse would be made available for adoption. Such adoption listings will be publicly advertised. A horse may be considered a candidate for adoption once it has reached one of the following qualifications:

    • the horse has reached its calendar age of twenty;

    • the horse has maintenance needs that are unmanageable at the University Farm (examples include, but are not limited to, needing to be fed in a way that is not manageable at the farm, a shoeing situation that is impractical, or needing to live inside at all times);

    • the horse can no longer comfortably perform a moderate workload (a moderate workload is considered to be a minimum of 4 days a week, walk/trot/canter for at least one hour with riders of no more than 20% of their body weight);

    • If the horse is used for breeding purposes, an adoption will be considered if the mare has experienced breeding or foaling complications, has been unable to maintain a pregnancy to parturition, or requires extraordinary measures to establish and maintain pregnancy.

    The determination of whether a horse meets one or more of these adoption criteria will be made by the Equine Science faculty member charged with managing the horse herd in consultation with the equine faculty member responsible for teaching riding classes and equestrian team activities (horsemanship instructor and/or equestrian team coach). Adoption criteria will be reviewed and revised as necessary.

    An OTGP Adoption Committee will be comprised of five students appointed annually by the University administrator with oversight of the University Farm and Equine Program. Five committee members will be chosen to represent the following positions/expertise:

1. a Truman student who resides at the University Farm who is actively involved with the Truman horse herd on a regular basis;

2. a Truman student involved in the pre-vet club and preferably with equine experience (preference will be given to the President of the Pre-Vet Club or another member of its executive board),

3. a Truman student on the Truman Equestrian Team (preference will be given to the President of the Truman State Equestrian Team or another member of its executive board);

4. a Truman student involved with the equine program and preferably with additional equine experience outside of the University;

5. a Truman student with animal science or animal physiology knowledge that would be recommended by the Biology and Agricultural Science faculty

The adoption process will be unbiased. All reviews and adoptions will be conducted on an "arms-length" basis. If any prospective committee member believes that they, a family member, or close associate will have interest in applying to adopt any horse from the University in the coming year, the committee member should recuse them self from serving on the committee.

In addition to the five committee members, the Equine Program administrator will act as an advisor to the committee. The Advisor's duties will be to train, orient, and oversee the committee to ensure that all members are made aware of their responsibilities.

Prospective adopters will be complete and submit an adoption application. Applications will be collected and stored by the office of the Dean of Science and Mathematics. The advisor will remove all personally identifying information from a prospective adopters' applications before providing the applications to the student committee for evaluation and scoring.

Committee members will evaluate applications using a pre-established scoring rubric. The committee will establish a minimum rubric score below which an applicant would be deemed unacceptable. After all applications have been scored and ranked, the advisor will make veterinarian reference checks to the veterinarian(s) provided by each applicant. A negative veterinarian reference, or the inability to contact the veterinarian within a reasonable amount of time, may be the basis for disqualifying an applicant.

Following a successful veterinarian reference, the prospective adopters will be contacted in rank order based on their rubric scores. The highest ranked applicant will be given the first opportunity to adopt the horse. If the highest ranked applicant chooses not to adopt the horse, then the remaining acceptable applicants will be contacted in rank order until the horse is adopted.

There will be a uniform adoption fee for each horse. The fee will be established by the adoption committee at the beginning of each adoption cycle. The adoption fee may be adjusted based on University costs associated with the OTGP program.