

Project Trains Future Scientists and Improves Equine Health

Sarah Ralston, a Rutgers professor, has created a unique program that teaches Rutgers students to train and handle horses, provides research opportunities to undergraduate students, and is contributing valuable new information to New Jersey's equine industry.

Ralston's research focuses on the nutrition and management of young warmblood and draft-cross "sport" horses. She has found that the current National Research Council recommendations for feeding young horses are not entirely appropriate for draft-cross sport horses, and is currently further defining the nutrient needs of this type of horse.

Another research project is bringing the Rutgers horses to bear in the creation of new knowledge about insulin resistance. This condition is the hallmark of type II diabetes and "metabolic syndrome" in both humans and horses. She has recently teamed up with Dr. István Pelczer of Princeton University. Together, they are using cutting-edge technology to study insulin resistance and its contribution to developmental orthopedic disease in young horses.

Program-related research is available to the public through presentations to horse groups and other scientists. Ralston also is available for consults with horse owners through the program's student-run website: web.mac.com/ru_horses. The yearly auction of the young horses used in the program also serves as a conduit for the public to learn about how Rutgers is assisting the equine industry.

Your monetary support of this program will help ensure that young scientists gain vital experiences that enhance their personal and professional development, and that horses continue to be an important part of Rutgers research and the New Jersey economy. Please contact The Office of Development at 732-932-9000, ext. 576 or development@sebs.rutgers.edu for more information.

For more information, visit us at www.sebs.rutgers.edu/development.

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School of Environmental
and Biological Sciences

School of Environmental and Biological Sciences
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
88 Lipman Drive, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8525
Phone: 732.932.3000