

Outline of Arkell Equine Research Station Fees

Updated: March 2009

Rationale: The Arkell Equine herd is a valuable resource for U of G equine researchers as a source of ponies, foals and horses for reproductive, respiratory, locomotion/performance and other studies. However, since most of the equine research studies are conducted at on-campus facilities, and Arkell is largely a 'housing' facility, it requires a different research station fee model than that used for other OMAFRA Research Stations (i.e. where research is conducted on-site at the stations).

Consistent with the principles for management of research station fees at other stations, the model outlined below for Arkell Equine Research Station fees is intended to:

- Give priority access and fee offsets for OMAFRA-approved projects
- Apportion costs of operating the Arkell Equine herd equitably among the users of the herd
- Be as simple to understand and administer as possible

The Model:

The overall cost of operating the Arkell Equine herd is ~\$247.5K per year. The normal, target herd size is 75 ponies and horses. **Thus the average cost per head is \$3300 per year, as of 2009.** (Note: This herd size is essentially limited to this level due to nutrient management restrictions at the Arkell Station.) Analysis to date has shown that there is little effective difference in the per-head cost of maintaining and managing ponies versus full size horses, so no differential price will be assigned.

Most of the horses/ponies at Arkell are kept year-round for targeted research purposes and because obtaining horses from other sources would be difficult, more costly and/or suitable horses could not be obtained. However, wherever suitable horses, ponies or foals can be obtained readily from other sources at lower cost than year-round housing at Arkell, these alternative sources should be given serious consideration (to allow for more flexibility in numbers of other groupings).

The duration that Arkell horses and/or ponies are not at Arkell (i.e., are on-campus) is generally kept as short as possible due to the higher costs of care at on-campus facilities. Thus, the full-year rate will not be adjusted other than in exceptional cases.

Therefore, the research station fees for Arkell horses and ponies will be established at the rate of \$3300 per year per animal (rather than as a per diem rate).

Assignment of horses, ponies and foals to specific researchers or studies will be done at the time Equine project proposals are reviewed and approved each year (generally during the Winter semester) by the Equine Coordinator.

Horse, ponies and foals being used in OMAFRA-approved research studies (Tiers I, II or III) will only be charged the net subsidized research station fee. The subsidized fee is calculated as 8% of total research station fees in each year of a project. The balance of the research station value should be noted as an in-kind OMAFRA contribution to your project. (For a description of the Tiers I – IV, please refer to http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/omafra/sustainable_production_systems/index.shtml)

Horses, ponies and foals used in projects not approved by OMAFRA (i.e. Tier IV projects) will be charged the full per annum research station fee.

Where use of individual or groups of horses and/or ponies is shared among researchers, the Equine Program Coordinator will pro-rate the applicable per annum research station fees (and offsets) among these users.

Any exceptions to this will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Equine Program Coordinator (Jeff Thomason) in consultation with Station management.

Access to Arkell horses is given first to Tier I OMAFRA projects (those that receive OMAFRA project operating funds), followed by Tiers II, III (both of which meet OMAFRA research priorities but receive no project operating \$) and Tier IV (proprietary or not OMAFRA approved) projects in order, subject to availability of animals.

Administration:

Horse / pony 'groupings' will be assigned to the respective 'user group' of researchers each year (in tandem with review and approval of Equine Guelph project awards).

In the absence of an OMAFRA Tier I project award, approved Equine Guelph projects must be submitted to the Office of Research (Agri-Food & Partnerships) to be reviewed by OMAFRA for approval as Tier II / III projects.

The number of horses and/or ponies in a group and the number of researchers in user groups will determine the net fees that will be billed to each researcher. Approved Tier I, II or III projects will be billed at the subsidized rate. Tier IV projects will be billed the full research station fee value.

Actual billing for horse and pony use will occur late in the fiscal year based on actual horse and pony use and the researchers in the user group (i.e. to account for projects and/or users added or dropped).

An Example – Arkell Pony Herd:

Arkell currently has a stock of 24 ponies (22 mares and 2 stallions), kept primarily for the provision of foals for pathogenic studies. A typical number of foals available and utilized each year is 15 -18.

This means that a total of \$79,200 (24 x \$3,300/head/year) in research station fees per year needs to be covered, collectively, by the users of the 18 foals.

For the sake of this example, let's assume there are 3 researchers using the pony herd/foals.

Also assuming all 3 researchers have OMAFRA-approved projects (i.e. Tier I, II, or III) and each is utilizing the foals to roughly the same extent, each of these researchers would be billed the net subsidized fee of \$330 each year for each of the 8 mares in their 'share' of the herd (i.e. $\$79,200 \times 10\% = \$7,920$ total net fee, divided among the 3 researchers = \$2,640).

Alternatively, if Researcher A was the big user (i.e. used 75% of the foals), their research station fees would be prorated to 75% of the \$7,920, and the fees for the other two researchers would be reduced accordingly.

Please direct any questions to:

Natalie Carter (cartern@uoguelph.ca; 519-826-3809)

Ken Hough (kehough@uoguelph.ca; 519-826-3827) or

Jeff Thomason (jthomaso@ovc.uoguelph.ca ; 519-824-4120, x54934).