

Conformation of the Horse

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Outline

- Basic Anatomy
- Balance
- Muscle
- Specific regions of body
- Breed differences



Basic Horse Anatomy



“Vet Words”

Front Legs

- Knee
 - Carpus
- Front cannon bone
 - 3rd metacarpal bone
- Front splint bones
 - 2nd and 4th metacarpal bones
- Fetlock
 - Metacarpophalangeal joint
- Pastern
 - Proximal interphalangeal joint

Hind Legs

- Coffin bone
 - Third phalanx
- Stifle
 - Femorotibial joint
- Hock
 - Tarsus
- Hind cannon bone
 - 3rd metatarsal bone
- Hind splint bones
 - 2nd or 4th metatarsal bones

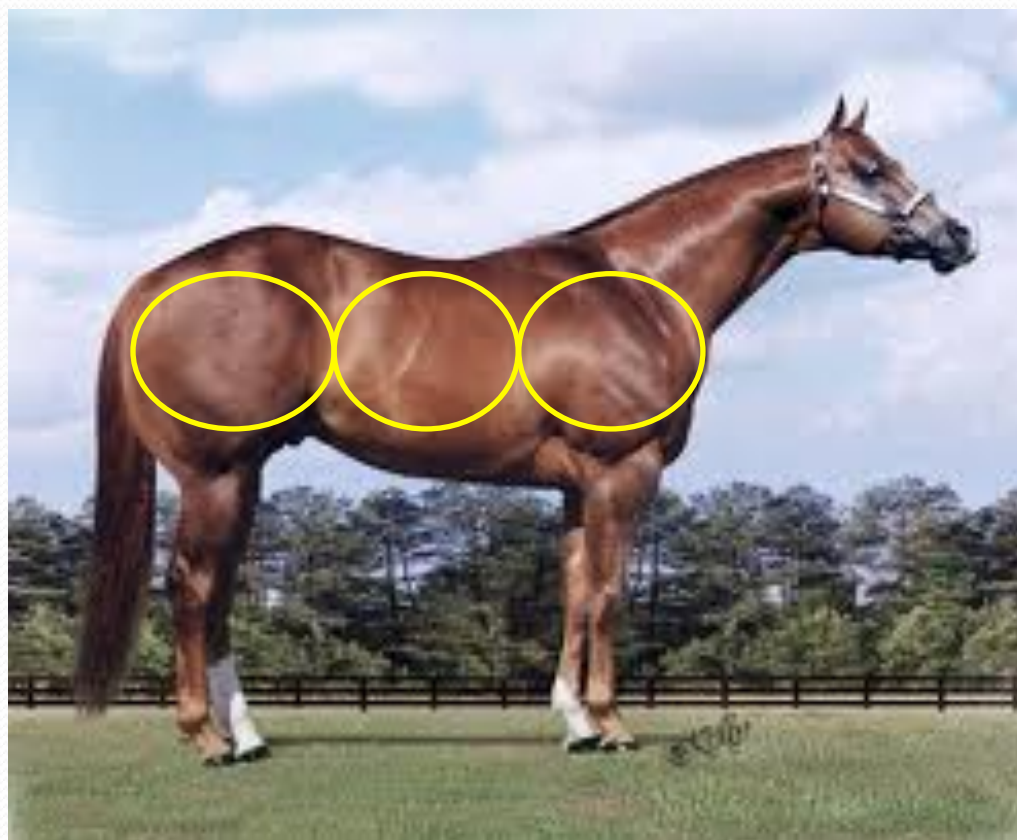


Ideal Horse

- Balanced
- Refined
- Well muscled

Balance

- Divide horse in thirds
 - Hindquarters
 - Barrel
 - Forequarters



Muscling

- Adequate mass
- Definition
- Smoothly blending



Head

- Wide forehead
- Bright, large eyes
- Refined throat latch
- “Chiseled” features
- Small, alert ears



Abnormalities of the Head

Roman nose



Wry nose



Parrot mouth

Neck & Chest

- Long, refined neck
- Neck comes cleanly out of chest
- Good condition
 - “cresty” necks only in stallions
- Well muscled chest
 - Pectoral muscles
- Wide chest



Cresty neck



Back

- Short
- Strong
- Even, flat topline



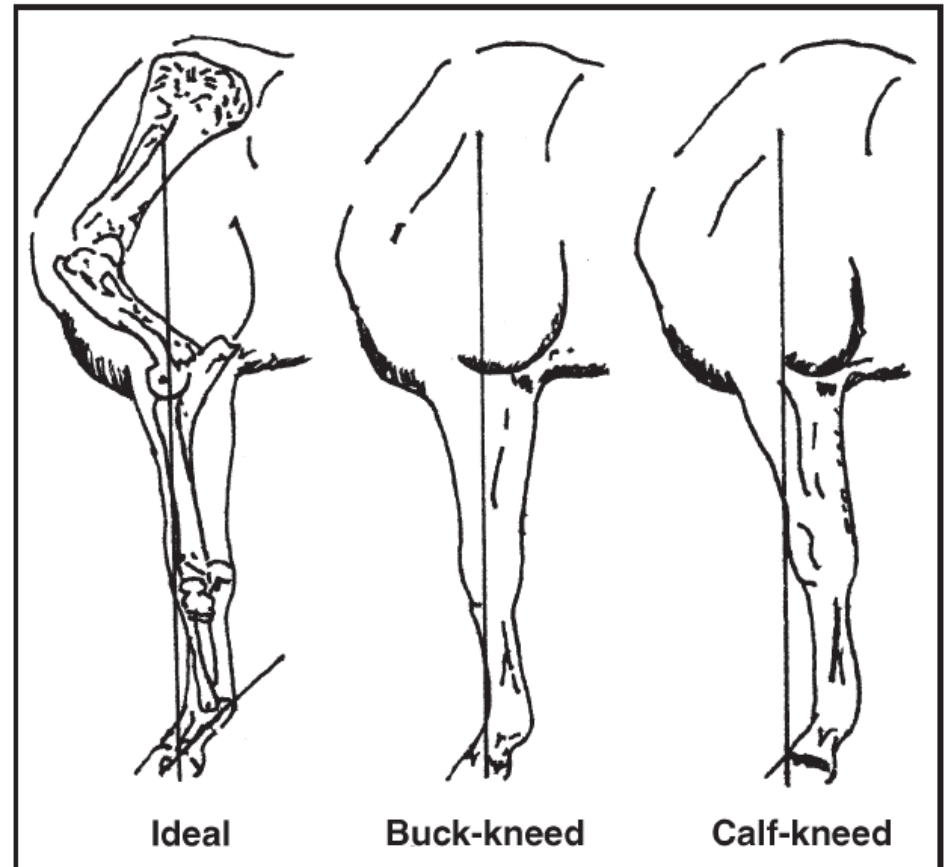
Barrel

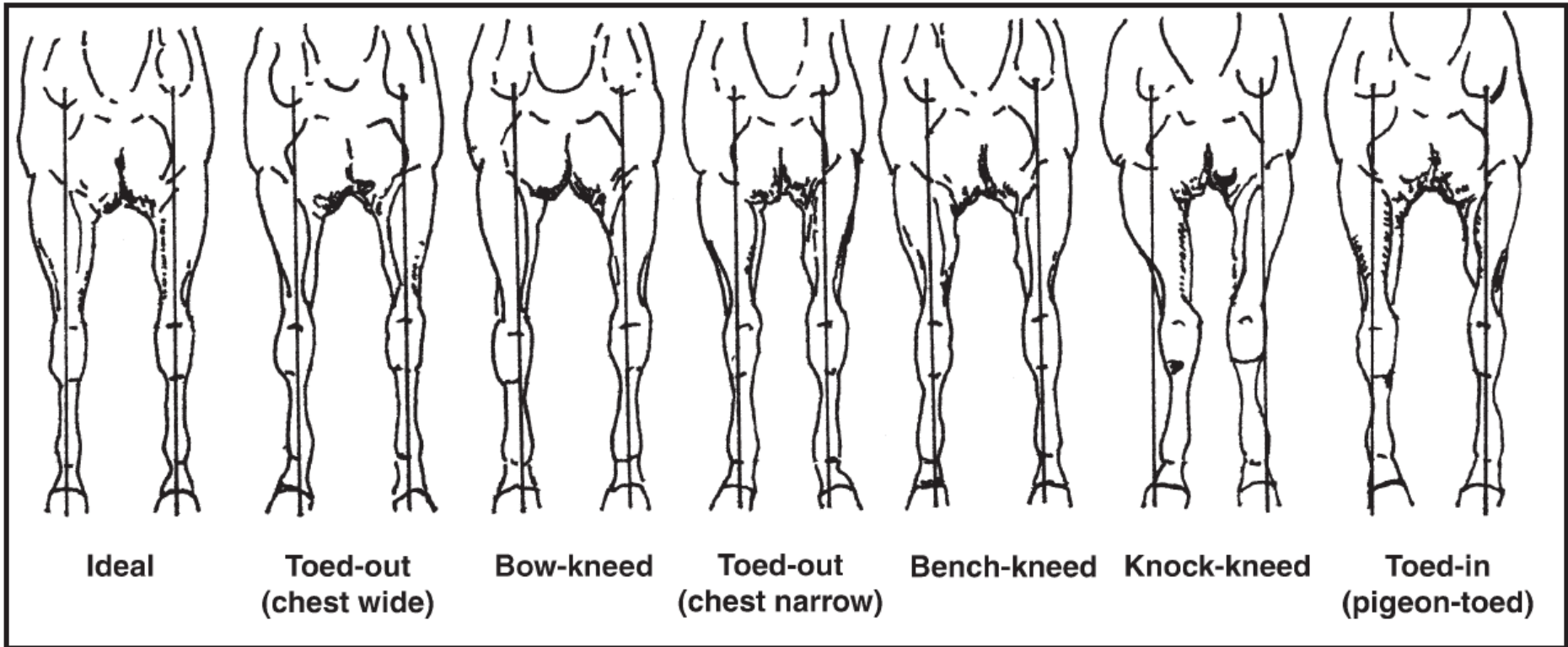
- Good condition
 - Not too fat or too thin
- Short
- Deep heart girth



Front Legs

- Strong, angular shoulder
- Knees
 - Straight
 - Centered on bones
- Cannon bones
 - Free of blemishes
 - Straight



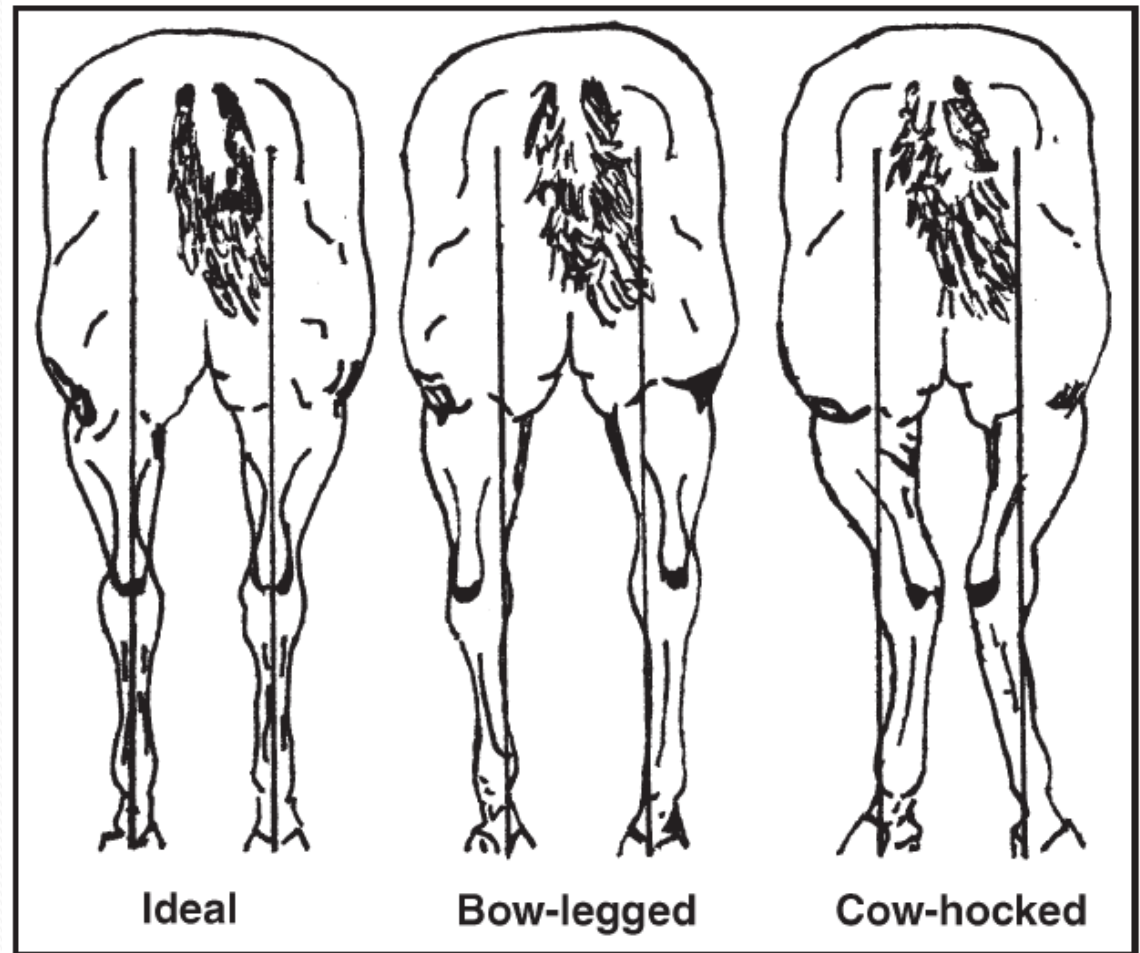


Front Legs

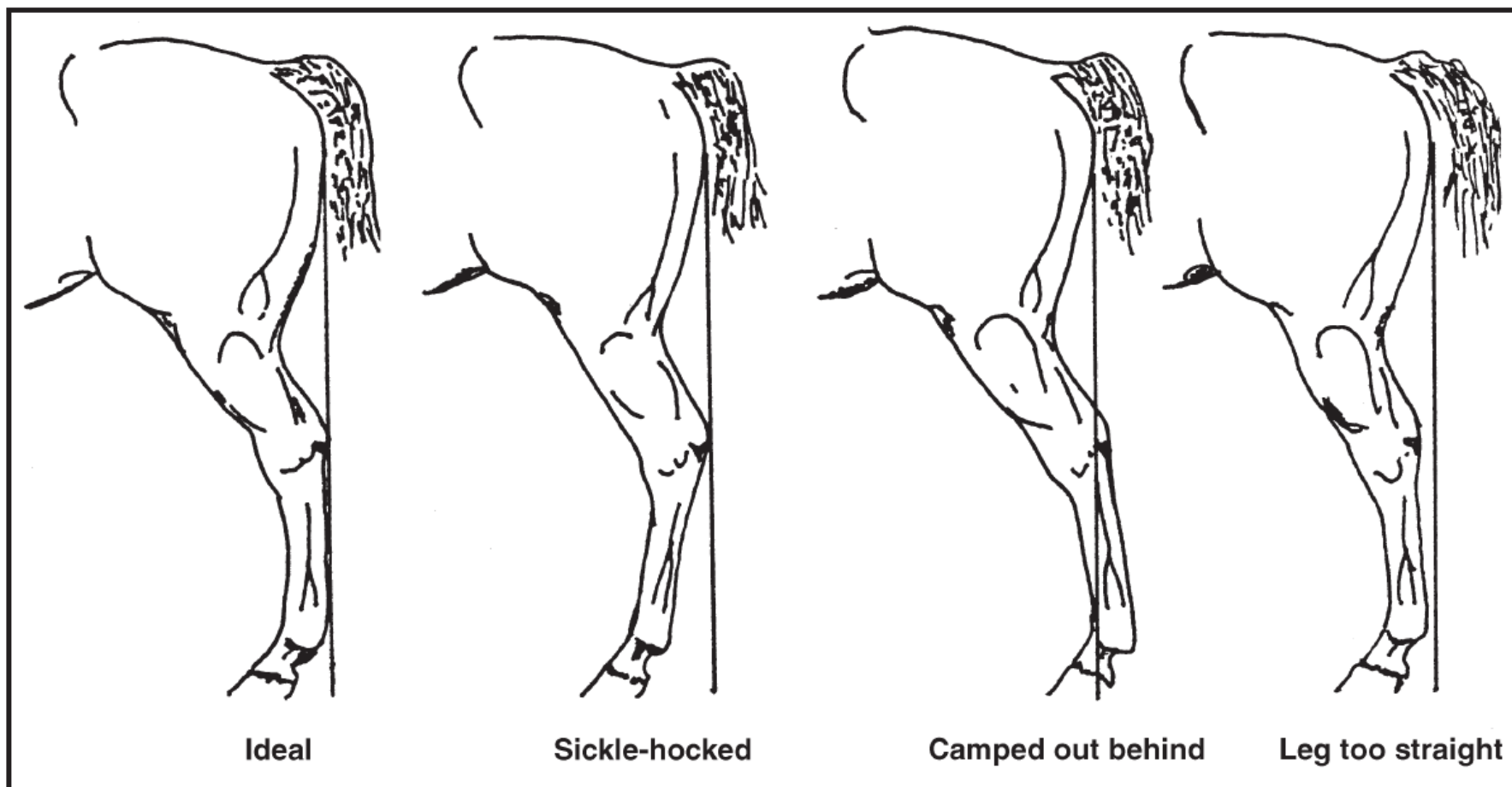


Hind Legs

- Straight line from point of hock to ground



Hind Legs





Breed Differences

- Arabians
- Morgans
- Quarter Horses
- Draft Horses
- Tennessee Walking Horses

Arabians



Arabians

- Dished face
- Small ears
- Fine bones
- Typically smaller than many horses
- Short back
 - One less vertebrae than other horses!



Morgans

- Short, stocky
- Wide forehead
- Thicker throatlatch
- Wide barrel
- High tail set



Quarter Horses & Paints





Quarter Horses & Paints

- “Stock” type horses
- Wide based
- Very muscular
- Different types
 - Halter
 - Western performance
 - Hunter under saddle

Draft Horses



Draft Horses

- Short, strong neck and back
- “Closer behind”
 - Appear cow hocked
- High set neck



Tennessee Walking Horses

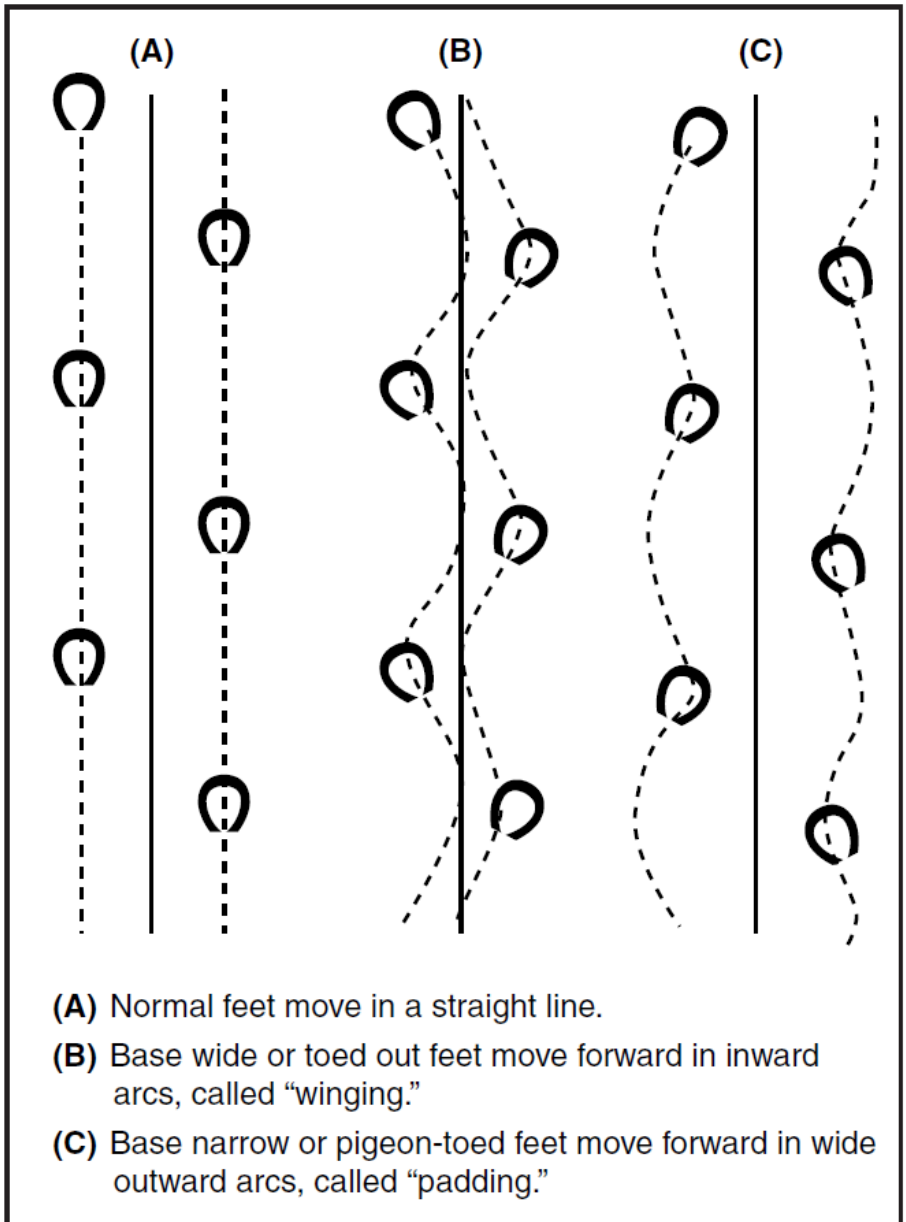
- High set neck
- Short strong back
- Longer face



provided by Stuart Vesty Photography

Tracking

- Straight lines
- Consistent stride



Questions????





References

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 - www.morganhorse.com
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 - www.aqha.com
- Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders and Exhibitors Association
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