

Notice to trainers

Hydration of horses whilst on course at a race meeting

RWWA Stewards advise all Thoroughbred and Harness trainers that it is not permitted to offer any drinking fluid other than freshly drawn water to a horse whilst located on a racecourse, prior to its racing engagement.

By way of explanation, it is not permitted to offer water to a horse prior to its racing commitment that contains any additives including but not limited to electrolytes or molasses, etc. Water must not be brought to the racecourse and all drinking water must be freshly drawn at the course.

With a number of rules now restricting medication and treatment of various kinds on race day prior to competition it is not appropriate for horses to be receiving anything other than freshly drawn water prior to racing.

RWWA Veterinarians have advised that offering freshly drawn water is an appropriate measure to meet the hydration needs of a healthy racehorse prior to competition.

Trainers are advised that molasses only is permitted to be added to freshly drawn water for the purposes of encouraging horses to drink post-race, however, must only be offered after their engagement is concluded (and after any post-race sample collection has been concluded).

Any horse selected for post-race drug control samples, must not receive anything other than freshly drawn drinking water until such time as the required drug control samples have been collected.

Molasses must only be brought onto the racecourse in a clearly marked container.

Any horse that is found or is reasonably suspected of having been given access to water with anything added to it (including molasses) will be withdrawn from its engagement and the person concerned may be liable to a breach and penalty under the RWWA Rules of Racing.

Brad Lewis
Chief Steward – Thoroughbred and Harness
Effective 1st April 2023.