Monday 9 November 2026

SPREYDON LODGE TO ADOPT NEW TRAINING MODEL

The Nevele R Stud Board has confirmed that its racing operation, Spreydon Lodge, will transition to a new training model from the end of 2027, utilising a selection of public trainers to prepare and race its horses.

The decision follows a wider strategic review of Nevele R Stud's breeding and racing operations, with a continued emphasis on quality, performance and long-term sustainability.

For many years, Spreydon Lodge has operated a private training establishment at West Melton. More recently, Spreydon Lodge has progressively reduced its broodmare numbers from approximately 40 to around 30, adopting a more focused approach to breeding and developing quality Standardbreds.

Helena Francis, Trustee/Director of the Francis Group, said the revised training model reflected the changing requirements of the business.

"Our commitment to breeding and racing quality Standardbreds remains as strong as ever. This decision is about adapting our operating model to better support our long-term ambitions, while ensuring the business remains sustainable."

Ms Francis acknowledged the significant contribution made by Spreydon Lodge's staff over many years.

"A consultation process has been undertaken involving the five affected staff at Spreydon Lodge, with the outcome being that their roles will be disestablished from December 2027."

"We sincerely thank our staff for their dedication, professionalism and contribution to Spreydon Lodge. This has not been an easy decision, and we recognise the personal impact it will have on those involved."

With an extended transition period in place, no decisions have yet been made regarding which public trainers will be approached. Marketing of the Newtons Road, West Melton training facility is likely to commence during the third quarter of 2027.

Nevele R Stud remains firmly committed to the future of New Zealand harness racing, both as a leading breeding operation and through its continued ambition to breed, develop and race outstanding Standardbreds.

The distinctive Wayne Francis Franco colours will remain a proud and visible part of that commitment for many years to come.

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Notes: Nevele R Stud Ltd and Spreydon Lodge Ltd are both part of the Francis Group of companies. The Francis Group is involved in Standardbred breeding and racing, property ownership and development, and philanthropic activities through the Wayne Francis Foundation.