

Draft Horse Breeds Around the World

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Around the world there are many different types and breeds of horses, based on what they are being used for. One of the most versatile types of horses are draft horses. Draft horses are large horses of different sizes that are mainly used for pulling heavy loads, pulling a cart or plow, showing, and more. Before high-tech machinery and tractors, draft horses were the tool farmers and ranchers used for helping get work done. Also, draft horses were used in the military as pack horses or to carry the soldiers, especially in World War 1. Some of the most common breeds around the world may include the Dutch Draft Horse, North Swedish Horse, American Cream Draft, Friesian, and Clydesdales. All of these breeds have different backgrounds and their roles in today's society.

The Dutch Draft Horse originated in the Netherlands, in the early 1920's, and was mainly used for heavy farm work due to their very large size and muscular build. Even today, the Dutch Draft is one of the heaviest draft breeds registered, which causes this breed to be very similar to the Belgian Heavy Draft breed. Even though they are such as big animal, standing at sixteen hands high, they have tons of energy for their size. Their physique includes short ears, unlike some draft breeds, a strong chest, well-built hindquarters with stocky legs all the way around, and overall, very solid and sound. The main color of the Dutch Draft is bay, black, chestnut, and gray.

This breed was brought up by crossbreeding with heavy draft mares in New Zealand, which is the most western southern district of the Netherlands, and it consists of many islands and peninsulas, and crossed with other larger breeds, such as Ardennes and Brabant's from Belgium. This was most common during World War 1 to help the

farmers and ranchers with any agriculture work, such as plowing and pulling logs from fields. After the second World War is when heavy machinery came into play, thus causing the original downfall of the breed. The horses weren't needed as much, since the use of tractors became easier and easier. In 1914, the Royal Society for the Preservation of Dutch Draft Horses was established to help protect them and conserve breeding rights. This association is still in effect to keep these animals around.

Today, the number of this breed is still fairly low. The last known estimate is roughly 1424 horses registered. With modern technology and even more farm equipment, the use for horses on the ranch are slim. Though, some still use Dutch Drafts for pulling, the majority of them are being used as show competition horses. They compete in events like driving. They are a great example to children to be able to show them such a huge animal, because this breed has a calm temperament.

For further breeding of Dutch Drafts, many people sought them out since they are considered to be one of the most influential Dutch breeds due to its mass and power. While the Royal Society for the Preservation of Dutch Draft Horses is still in effect, there is no stud registry making this breed uncommon in today's society.

The next main breed we see is the North Swedish Horse originated in Sweden in 1901 as a cross between Norwegian Dolahest and the Friesian. Also, they come from the same bloodlines as the Dole Horse of Norway, which is also a descendant of the ancient Scandinavian native horse. There are two different types of North Swedish Horses, the draft horse and the trotter. These two were combined to produce a lighter size that had a fast trot for showing and racing, and then a heavy draft breed that can compare to

other large drafts like the Belgian or Dutch breeds. Just like those other draft breeds, these animals were used in farming, as well as pack horses for the military and in forestry work. After the breed was around for a while, the North Swedish Association was developed in 1924. Then in 1949, an event called the County Horse Day Fair was created to be able to register all the mares and stallions through a studbook. For better registration regulations, the Stallion Rearing Institute of Wangen enforced strict breeding rules to select for specific traits that breeders are looking for. To make sure these rules are being followed and enforced, testing is required. Some of these tests include character, ability to work, fertility, gait springiness/power, leg stride, correctness, and balance then energy.

This Swedish horse is a medium-sized draft horse. The mare only gets to roughly fifteen hands high, while the stallions get to about 15.2 hands high. Considering these horses are just a little bit smaller, they contain tons of energy and stamina with clean and sound bones. Usually, draft horse breeds require a higher nutritional quantity, but North Swedish Horses require less grain than normal keeping them super healthy throughout their lifetime, which is roughly 30-31 years. Their looks can compare to a Friesian. They have super thick and luscious mane and tails that adds to their charm everyone loves. Today, these horses are very common in Norway, Finland, and Estonia. Breeding regulations are still in effect and highly controlled to preserve bloodlines.

Then there is the American Cream Draft was originated in the early 1900's and referred to as the "Old Granny". Old Granny was an old horse that came from a farm sale in Story County, Iowa in 1911. Old Granny was a cream-colored draft mare of

unknown ancestry that was born in 1890-1905. She consistently produced cream colored, which made breeders very interested in her specific color bloodline. Then a stallion named Silver Lace was born in 1932, which was a great-great-grandson of Old Granny. His build was 16 hands high and weigh 2,200 pounds, which is extremely heavy draft horse. Later down the road, Clarence T. Rierson became interested in all offspring sired by Silver Lace. He then went on to buy all the offspring he could from him. Rierson then co-founded the American Cream Horse Association in 1944. Then in 1950, they were set as a standard for the state of Iowa and its Department of Agriculture, but just like many breeds after the war the breed declined and so did the organization. In 1982, the organization was re-opened to create more of this declining breed.

American Cream Draft Horses were known for their looks and their looks sound just like their name, a cream-color. They have complimentary pink skin and amber eyes, which makes up the three most important traits of these gorgeous horses. They stand at 15-16.3 hands high, and mares weigh around 1600–1800 pounds. Then stallions weigh around 1800-2000 pounds.

Today, there are still very low numbers of horses, 400, but is slowly increasing with the help of the American Cream Horse Association of America. This organization has been working hard to be very proactive about testing since JEB was discovered. Dr. Gus Cothran at the University of Kentucky Equine Blood Typing Lab to test the genetic parameters of this breed and expand breeding objectives.

One of the most popular draft breeds everywhere is the Friesian Horse is a warmblood breed, originating from Friesland, which is a province in the Netherlands, as

a result of crossing Andalusians from Spain and Dutch horses. In the Middle Ages, the Friesian ancestors were very sought-after war horses, because of their size and body build. They can easily carry a full back of armor into the battlefield. In Europe, they were common for carriage horses. This breed was brought into North America through the Dutch Colony, New Amsterdam in 1625. This essentially was the main influence to bring other breeds into this part of the world. Although, it wasn't until 1974 that purebred Friesians was introduced as show horses.

Friesians are highly recognized by their looks, upright and noble carriage, black hair coat, long and thick mane, tail, and forelock. These horses are graceful for their size which makes them such a great asset to have for showing. Considering their lighter size and wonderful looks, Friesians can be seen in all sorts of showing disciplines, such as dressage, high-stepping, saddle seat, hunter jumping, driving, and even some western work. The main color of these horses is black, but there can also be blue silver dapple, roan, or possible gray. As of 2014, the United States populations was roughly more than 8,000 and a global population of roughly more than 60,000.

Clydesdale horses are one of the most popular draft breeds in modern society due to social media and television, commonly known as the Budweiser horses. Today, around 600 horses a year are being registered with Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, and the United States, with the U.S representing the largest portion. Nowadays, they are being used for competition, shows, and being used as an overall level-headed sport horse. Clydesdales are a huge attraction at state fairs. Many ranches, like Express Ranch being very common, bring them for the driving competitions and let all the people

experience the animals. Sometime these ranches will even let people feed them at the fair. Their diet consists of about 25-50 pounds of hay and 2-4 lbs of grain each day based on their weight and activity level. One thing to be careful about though, is common health issues associated with these horses. One common problem is lymphedema, which is a disease that causing swelling in the legs. Other problems are skin infections under their thick feathers on their legs.

They were developed in Scotland in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in the Lanarkshire district. The name "Clydesdale" came from the Clyde River that flows through that districts area. Clydesdales are very common in North America today. They were brought in when Scottish settlers brought horses Canada. In their upbringing, this breed was used for farm work like plowing fields, pull wagons, and other things that require maximum strength. After World War 1, the nearly became extinct. In 1877, the Clydesdale Horse Society was formed as the official breed registry.

The world has a rich diversity of draft breeds, each having their own characteristics and uses. Despite draft horses' large size, they can be a wonderful animal for a variety of purposes. They are tough and durable but can also be gentle and willing pets.

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