

The Impact of Purse Subsidies On Horse Racing in New Jersey



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2024 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR, LEGISLATURE, AND NEW JERSEY RACING COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In 2019, the Legislature enacted Senate and General Assembly bills to create P.L. 2019, c. 36, which appropriated \$20 million annually from the state general fund to the New Jersey Racing Commission for the next fiscal year 2019 and the following four fiscal years. These funds were to be used as horse racing purse subsidies, split equally between the Thoroughbred and Standardbred industries.

That original statute not only created the appropriation but also imposed detailed reporting requirements on the horsemen's organizations as a condition of receiving continued funding.

The reporting requirement tied to this funding remains in effect under N.J.S.A. 5:5-99.2, as amended. The law conditions future appropriations on the timely submission of an annual report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the New Jersey Racing Commission.

The statute is pretty clear on what must be included. The report needs to cover:

- 1) How the purse subsidy impacted handle (total betting), field size, and participation by New Jersey-bred horses (entries and winners);
- 2) Breeding activity, including the number of broodmares in New Jersey and the number of foals born in the State;
- 3) The impact on the New Jersey Sire Stakes program;
- 4) Comparative data covering the funded fiscal year against the prior five years, including number of races held, number of horses per race, number of bets placed, number of young horses stabled in New Jersey, and racetrack attendance and revenues.

HORSE RACING METRICS

Combined transmission ranged from \$40.6 million in 2019 to \$45.8 million in 2024, an increase of 12.8 percent. OTW decreased from \$33.5 million in 2019 to \$23.6 million in 2024, a decrease of 30.0 percent. Track wagering was down from \$5.2 million in 2019 to \$4.1 million in 2024, a decrease of 21.0 percent. Casino wagering decreased from \$1.8 million in 2019 to \$0.9 million in 2024, a decrease of 50.0 percent. Wagering on New Jersey races outside of New Jersey increased from \$358.8 million in 2019 to \$434.3 million in 2024, an increase of 21.0 percent. Live handle decreased from \$40.8 million in 2019 to \$21.2 million in 2024, a decrease of 48.0 percent. Total wagering increased from \$480.8

million in 2019 to \$529.9 million in 2024, an increase of 10.0 percent. This is a reflection of the quality of the New Jersey racing product.

Live attendance at New Jersey racetracks rebounded after a low in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Attendance increased from 515,798 in 2021 to 646,849 in 2024, an increase of 25.4 percent. Number of race days remained relatively constant, except for 2020 during the pandemic; averaging 226.5 for the period 2021-2024. Total number of races held decreased during the pandemic and ranged from 2,735 in 2021 to 2,616 in 2024, a decrease of 5.0 percent. Average number of horses per race remained constant averaging 8 for the period 2019-2024.

The New Jersey Sire Stakes program has benefited well from the purse subsidies. Purses for stakes races rose from \$2.9 million in 2019 to \$4 million in 2023 and 2024; an increase of 38.0 percent.

BREEDING FARM METRICS

Horse breeding farms are key to the agricultural landscape in the State. The breeding and training of horses is recognized as agricultural production in the Garden State.

While the number of Standardbred stallions standing in New Jersey decreased during the period, the number of mares bred to New Jersey sires increased from 751 in 2019 to 766 in 2023, an increase of 2.0 percent. The number of horses on SBOA-NJ affiliated breeding farms increased from 1,231 in 2019 to 1,689 in 2024; an increase of 37.0 percent. The fluctuation of number of horses on farms may be due to the decrease in number of stallions standing in New Jersey.

Total number of registered trotting foals increased from 361 in 2019 to 374 in 2023; an increase of 3.6 percent. Total number of pacing foals increased from 123 in 2019 to 147 in 2023; an increase of 20.0 percent. Data for 2024 continues to be collected.

For the number of mares bred to New Jersey Thoroughbred stallions for the period 2021-2024, the number decreased from 55 in 2021 to 44 in 2024; a decrease of 20.0 percent. The number of registered New Jersey-Bred foals also decreased from 118 in 2021 to 79 in 2024; a decrease of 33.0 percent. This may be a reflection of the reduced number of stallions registered in the State; thirteen in 2021 to 11 in 2024.

TRAINING CENTER METRICS

The training of horses for the purpose of racing increases the value of those horses and is considered agricultural production by the State of New Jersey.

Reflective of the positive impact of the purse subsidy legislation, the number of New Jersey-bred Standardbred horses in training increased for the period. Total 2-year olds trained increased from 44 in 2019 to 210 in 2024; an increase of 377.0 percent. Total 3-year olds trained increased from 45 to 140; an increase of 211.0 percent. Total 4-year olds trained increased from 31 to 52; an increase of 68.0 percent. Total number of older horses trained increased from 38 to 45; an increase of 18.0 percent.

Total trained Standardbred 2-year olds increased from 259 in 2019 to 584 in 2024; an increase of 125.0 percent. Total trained 3-year olds increased from 299 in 2019 to 419 in 2024; an increase of 40.0 percent. Total trained 4-year olds increased from 234 in 2019 to 241 in 2024; an increase of 3.0 percent. Total trained older horses increased from 378 in 2019 to 565 in 2024; an increase of 49.0 percent.

Like Thoroughbred farms, Thoroughbred training centers are concentrated around the Monmouth Park Racetrack. The racetrack is heavily involved in the training process for thoroughbreds. The three largest training centers used by Thoroughbred horse owners in New Jersey are Colt's Neck Training Center, Overbrook Farm, and Westampton Farm. These training facilities offer trainers practice tracks and stalls for their horses along with several amenities including equine pools, motorized equine exercise machines, and round pens. Both Overbrook and Westampton Farms had an average of 100 horses using their facilities in 2020. Colt's Neck registered a slightly lower average of 70 horses throughout the year. Horses at these training facilities cycle through several different locations for training throughout year. These locations included several of the Thoroughbred breeding farms and the Monmouth Park Racetrack.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

New Jersey has a long history of horse racing, being one of the state's most important agricultural commodities. In 1870, Freehold Raceway opened, becoming the first dedicated horseracing track to open in the United States.

The people of New Jersey appreciate the socio-economic value of the horse racing industry which generates \$780 million of the \$1.1 billion economic impact of the New Jersey horse industry [1]. Two reports published by the Founding and Former Director of the Rutgers Equine Science Center found that New Jersey racehorse owners and breeders continued to remain non-competitive with New York and Pennsylvania, where horse racing purses were subsidized by revenue from casino gaming [2], [3].

Published in 2014 and 2019, The data presented convinced the Legislature and the State to subsidize horse racing purses to ensure the well-being of a socio-economic segment of New Jersey's history and important agricultural sector of the Garden State.

In 2019, the Legislature enacted Senate and General Assembly bills to create P.L. 2019, c. 36, which appropriated \$20 million annually from the state general fund to the New Jersey Racing Commission for the next fiscal year 2019 and the following four fiscal years. These funds were to be used as horse racing purse subsidies, split equally between the Thoroughbred and Standardbred industries.

That original statute not only created the appropriation, but also imposed detailed reporting requirements on the horsemen's organizations as a condition of receiving continued funding. At the end of the 2022-23 Session, the Legislature sought to extend the subsidy through Assembly Bill 5893 (A5893). However, Governor Murphy ultimately issued a pocket veto, rendering A5893 null. That veto was significant because A5893 did not fully replicate the statutory reporting requirements that had been built into the 2019 law. Finally, in 2024, the Legislature returned to the issue with Assembly Bill 2610 (A2610), which the Governor signed on September 12, 2024. A2610 formally renewed the \$20 million purse supplement through Fiscal Year 2029.

The recently enacted Fiscal Year 2026 State Budget includes a \$20 million appropriation for horse racing, once again split evenly between the Standardbred and Thoroughbred sectors. This is consistent with prior years and is a positive sign that the State continues to recognize the importance of maintaining a competitive racing industry in New Jersey.

The reporting requirement tied to this funding remains in effect under N.J.S.A. 5:5-99.2, as amended. The law conditions future appropriations on the timely submission of an annual report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the New Jersey Racing Commission.

The statute is pretty clear on what must be included.

The report needs to cover:

1. How the purse subsidy impacted handle (total betting), field size, and participation by New Jersey-bred horses (entries and winners);
2. Breeding activity, including the number of broodmares in New Jersey and the number of foals born in the State;
3. Impact on the New Jersey Sire Stakes program;
4. Comparative data covering the funded fiscal year against the prior five years, including number of races held, number of horses per race, number of bets placed, number of young horses stabled in New Jersey, and racetrack attendance and revenues.

The reporting obligation itself is not created by the budget bill; it lives in the permanent statute, N.J.S.A. 5:5-99.2 (“Requirements for receipt of funds”), originally enacted by P.L.2019, c.36 and amended by P.L.2024, c.76. The current codified text spells out exactly what must be filed and links the filing to continued eligibility for funding.

The statute requires that:

The report shall document the purposes for which these funds were used and the amounts allocated for those purposes, and shall include, at a minimum, the impact on handle or total amount bet, impact on total number of horses in races, number of broodmares in New Jersey, number of New Jersey bred foals, and impact on the New Jersey Sire Stakes program.

In addition, the law specifies that:

The report shall also include comparisons with the previous fiscal year and with each of the five years immediately preceding the first year in which funds were distributed, including, at a minimum, the number of races held, number of horses per race, number of bets placed, number of horses four years old or younger stabled in New Jersey for at least a majority of the calendar year, and number of spectators attending and revenue received from race track operations. This report is the fourth annual report of the state of the horse racing industry in New Jersey highlighting the results from 2019-2024.

FINDINGS:

Impact On Racetrack Metrics

Displayed in Table 1 is the impact the subsidy has had on the three major racetracks in New Jersey, Meadowlands, Freehold, and Monmouth Park. Unfortunately, Freehold Raceway permanently closed on December 28 of 2024. This has inflicted hardship on harness racing owners and trainers whose horses are not competitive at the Meadowlands Racetrack and who need to find tracks out of state to race. This provides a hardship of time and expense commitment to race in other states.

Displayed in Table 1 is the Combined Track Wagering Summary for the period 2019-2024.

Combined Track Wagering Summary (\$Millions) 2019-2024							
Year	Transmission	OTW	Track	Casino	Outside NJ	Live Handle	Total
2019	\$40.60	\$33.50	\$5.20	\$1.80	\$358.80	\$40.80	\$480.80
2020	\$40.40	\$17.10	\$2.90	\$0.70	\$318.60	\$19.10	\$398.89
2021	\$52.40	\$25.80	\$3.50	\$1.00	\$399.80	\$29.80	\$513.20
2022	\$50.00	\$28.70	\$4.10	\$1.00	\$403.00	\$31.70	\$518.40
2023	\$50.00	\$26.00	\$4.00	\$1.20	\$432.10	\$32.20	\$554.90
2024	\$45.80	\$23.60	\$4.10	\$0.90	\$434.30	\$21.20	\$529.90

Combined transmission ranged from \$40.6 million in 2019 to \$45.8 million in 2024, an increase of 12.8 percent. OTW decreased from \$33.5 million 2019 to \$23.6 million in 2024, a decrease of 30.0 percent. Track wagering was down from \$5.2 million in 2019 to \$4.1 million in 2024, a decrease of 21.0 percent. Casino wagering decreased from \$1.8 million in 2019 to \$0.9 million in 2024, a decrease of 50.0 percent.

Wagering on New Jersey races outside of New Jersey increased from \$358.8 million in 2019 to \$434.3 million in 2024, an increase of 21.0 percent. Live handle decreased from \$40.8 million in 2019 to \$21.2 million in 2024, a decrease of 48.0 percent. Total wagering increased from \$480.8 million in 2019 to \$529.9 million in 2024, an increase of 10.0 percent. This is a reflection of the quality of the New Jersey racing product.

Displayed in Table 2 is the Combined Race Day Summary 2019-2024

Combined Race Day Summary 2019-2024				
Year	Live Attendance	Number of Race Days	Total Races Held	Average Horses Per Race
2019	945,368	230	2,604	7.90
2020	232,708	178	2,121	8.30
2021	515,798	232	2,735	7.90
2022	669,108	228	2,663	7.80
2023	644,936	224	2,650	8.00
2024	646,849	222	2,616	7.90

Live attendance at New Jersey racetracks rebounded after a low in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Attendance increased from 515,798 in 2021 to 646,849 in 2024, an increase of 25.4 percent. Number of race days remained relatively constant, except for 2020 during the pandemic; averaging 226.5 for the period 2021-2024. Total number of races held decreased during the pandemic and ranged from 2735 in 2021 to 2616 in 2024, a decrease of 5.0 percent. Average number of horses per race remained constant averaging 8 for the period 2019-2024.

Displayed in Table 3 (a) is the wagering summary for the Meadowlands Racetrack for the period 2019-2024.

Meadowlands Wagering Summary (\$ Millions)									
Year	Internet	Phone	Mobile	Track	OTW	Casino	Outside NJ	Live Handle	Total
2019	\$4.60	\$0.20	\$3.50	\$2.50	\$6.10	\$1.10	\$199.00	\$17.60	\$234.60
2020	\$4.90	\$0.00	\$5.60	\$1.40	\$2.90	\$0.40	\$172.10	\$7.90	\$195.30
2021	\$5.90	\$0.00	\$6.70	\$2.00	\$4.40	\$0.50	\$244.20	\$12.30	\$276.00
2022	\$4.30	\$0.00	\$5.80	\$1.50	\$3.70	\$0.50	\$207.10	\$11.10	\$234.00
2023	\$4.10	\$0.00	\$5.70	\$1.60	\$3.50	\$0.50	\$247.80	\$11.60	\$274.80
2024	\$3.50	\$0.00	\$5.10	\$1.40	\$2.90	\$0.50	\$240.40	\$10.70	\$264.50

While many of the wagering outlets have decreased over the period, the racing product from the Meadowlands Racetrack is still attractive to bettors outside of New Jersey where wagering increased from \$199.00 million in 2019 to \$247.80 million in 2023, an increase of 24.5 percent.

Displayed in Table 3 (b) is the Meadowlands Racing Summary.

Meadowlands Racing Summary 2019-2024				
Year	Live Attendance	Number of Race Days	Total Races Held	Average Horses per Race
2019	353,298	94	1,163	8.9
2020	61,123	72	968	9.2
2021	141,245	95	1,237	8.6
2022	211,487	86	1,135	8.5
2023	221,352	89	1,228	8.9
2024	222,141	89	1,230	8.6

Attendance was greatest in 2019 before the Covid-19 pandemic. From 2022-2024 attendance ranged from 211,487 to 222,141. Number of race days remained relatively constant, averaging around 90. Total number of races held increased from 1,163 in 2019 to 1,230 in 2024, an increase of 5.4 percent. Average number of horses per race remained steady for the period, averaging 8.8.

Displayed in Table 3 (c) is the Freehold Wagering Summary.

Freehold Wagering Summary (\$Millions) 2019-2024				
Year	Combined Transmission	Off-Track Wagering	Live Handle	Total
2019	\$26.90	\$24.20	\$3.30	\$54.50
2020	\$21.60	\$12.40	\$2.30	\$36.30
2021	\$32.70	\$18.90	\$3.20	\$54.90
2022	\$30.90	\$22.10	\$2.80	\$55.80
2023	\$32.20	\$19.90	\$2.90	\$55.00
2024	\$29.30	\$18.20	\$2.80	\$50.30

During the period 2019-2024 Freehold Raceway averaged \$55 million in total handle per year. Reflected is a lower handle during the pandemic year of 2020.

Displayed in Table 3 (d) is the Freehold Race Day Summary.

Freehold Race Day Summary 2019-2024				
Year	Live Attendance	Number of Race Days	Total Races Held	Avg. Horses Per Race
2019	96,637	75	851	7.7
2020	64,277	62	667	7.9
2021	88,892	82	942	7.8
2022	89,520	82	922	7.53
2023	95,766	84	918	7.49
2024	99,177	83	898	7.48

Live attendance at Freehold Raceway increased and remained steady. Number of race days increased from 75 in 2019 to 83 in 2024; an increase of 10.6 percent.

Shown in Table 3 (e) is the wagering summary for the period for Monmouth Park.

Monmouth Park Wagering Summary (\$Millions) 2019-2024									
Year	Internet	Phone	Mobile	OTW	Track	Casino	Outside NJ	Live Handle	Total
2019	2.4	0.1	2.9	3.2	2.7	0.7	159.8	19.9	191.7
2020	3.3	0	5	1.8	1.5	0.3	146.5	8.9	167.3
2021	2.6	0	4.5	2.5	2.3	0.5	155.6	14.3	182.3
2022	2.88	0	6.13	2.86	2.61	0.493	195.9	17.8	228.6
2023	2.39	0	5.55	2.56	2.43	0.519	184.3	17.4	215.1
2024	2.24	0	5.66	2.49	2.7	0.428	193.9	17.7	225.1

Wagering from outside New Jersey remained steady throughout the period. Total handle increased from \$191.7 million in 2019 to 225.1 million in 2024, an increase of 17.4 percent.

Displayed in Table 3 (f) is the race day summary for the period.

Monmouth Park Race Day Summary 2019-2024				
Year	Live Attendance	# of Race Days	Total Races Held	Avg. Horses/Race
2019	495,433	61	590	7.1
2020	107,308	44	476	7.7
2021	285,661	55	556	7.4
2022	368,101	60	606	7.25
2023	327,818	51	504	7.71
2024	325,531	50	488	7.52

Live track attendance decreased from 495,433 in 2019 to 325,531 in 2024, a decrease of 34.0 percent. Number of race days decreased from 61 in 2019 to 50 in 2024, a decrease of 18.0 percent. Total races held decreased from 590 in 2019 to 488 in 2024, a decrease of 17.0 percent. Average number of horses per race remained constant over the period, averaging 7.4 horses per race.

Displayed in Table 4 (a) is the participation by New Jersey-bred horses at the Meadowlands Racetrack.

Participation By New Jersey-Bred Horses At The Meadowlands								
Year	NJ Overnight NJ Sire Awards	Winners	2YO Entries	Winners	3 YO Entries	Winners	Total Starts	Total Winners
2022	432	53	453	36	263	26	1148	115
2023	513	59	479	25	272	31	1264	115
2024	706	69	439	39	384	30	1529	138

NJ Overnight Sire Awards increased from 432 in 2022 to 706 in 2024, with winners increasing from 53 in 2022 to 69 in 2024. This reflects an increase in quality of NJ-bred horses.

Displayed in Table 4 (b) is the participation by New Jersey-bred horses at Freehold Raceway.

Participation by New Jersey-Bred Horses At Freehold Raceway								
Year	NJ Overnight NJ Sire Awards	Winners	2YO Entries	Winners	3 YO Entries	Winners	Total Starts	Total Winners
2022	180	25	109	11	39	7	328	43
2023	489	60	116	15	96	19	701	94
2024	610	51	112	13	88	18	810	82

NJ Overnight Sire Awards increased from 180 in 2022 to 610 in 2024, with winners increasing from 25 in 2022 to 51 in 2024.

Displayed in Table 4 (c) is the New Jersey Standardbred Sired Total Starts & Winners.

New Jersey Sired Total Starts & Winners		
Year	Total Starts	Total Winners
2022	1476	158
2023	1965	209
2024	2339	220

New Jersey Sired total starts increased from 1476 in 2022 to 2339 in 2024 an increase of 58.0 percent. Winners increased from 158 in 2022 to 220 in 2024, an increase of 39.0 percent.

Displayed in Table 4 (d) is the participation by New Jersey-bred horses at Monmouth Park.

Participation by New Jersey-Bred Horses At Monmouth Park						
Year	Total Number NJ-bred Starters	Total Number Of Winners	Total Number Of 2-YO Entries	Total Number Of 2-YO Winners	Total Number Of 3-YO Entries	Total Number Of 3-YO Winners
2022	781	96	103	15	201	30
2023	791	82	104	11	239	33
2024	851	95	91	10	288	35

Total number of New Jersey-bred starters increased from 781 in 2022 to 851 in 2024; an increase of 9.0 percent.

Impact On Breeding Farms

Horse breeding farms are key to the agricultural landscape in the State. The breeding of horses is recognized as agricultural production in the Garden State.

Displayed in Table 5 are the Number of Horses on all SBOANJ Affiliated Breeding Farms for the period 2019-2024.

Number Of Horses On All SBOANJ Affiliated Breeding Farms 2019-2024			
Year	Number Of Stallions	Number Of Broodmares Bred TO NJ Sires	Number Of Horses On Farm
2019	14	751	1231
2020	16	785	1696
2021	13	732	1800
2022	11	786	1767
2023	10	766	1343
2024	9	642	1689

While the number of stallions standing in New Jersey decreased during the period, the number of mares bred to New Jersey sires increased from 751 in 2019 to 766 in 2023, an increase of 2.0 percent. The number of horses on SBOA-NJ affiliated breeding farms increased from 1,231 in 2019 to 1,689 in 2024; an increase of 37.0 percent. The fluctuation of number of horses on farms may be due to the decrease in number of stallions standing in New Jersey.

Displayed in Table 6 is the Number of NJ-Bred Horses on all SBOANJ Affiliated Breeding Farms for the period 2019-2024.

Number Of NJ Bred Horses On All SBOANJ Affiliated Breeding Farms 2019-2024						
Year	Trotters			Pacers		
	Total Registered Foals	Colt	Filly	Total Registered Foals	Colt	Filly
2019	361	184	177	123	55	68
2020	389	201	188	115	63	52
2021	375	173	202	119	65	54
2022	322	158	164	190	105	85
2023	374	201	173	147	68	79
2024*	204	96	108	101	43	58

*Continual updates

Total number of registered trotting foals increased from 361 in 2019 to 374 in 2023; an increase of 3.6 percent. Total number of pacing foals increased from 123 in 2019 to 147 in 2023; an increase of 20.0 percent. Data for 2024 is continued to be collected.

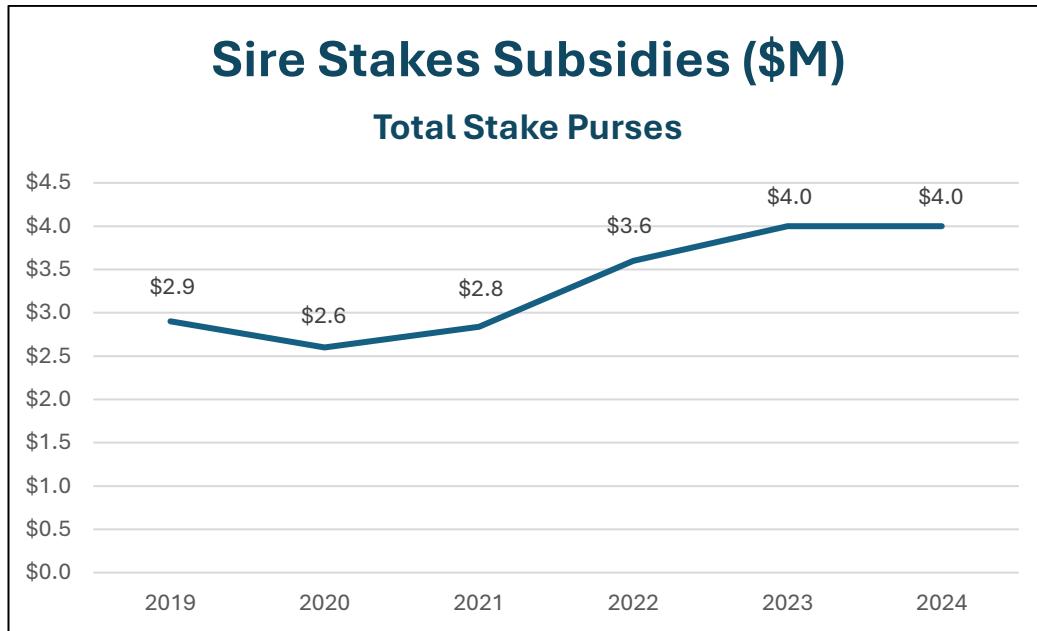
Displayed in Table 7 are the breeding metrics for Thoroughbred farms.

Number Of Horses On All NJTBA Breeding Farms 2019-2024						
Year	Registered NJ Bred Foals	Registered NJ Bred Stallions	Mares Bred To NJ Stallions	NJ Bred Restricted Races	Yearling Colts	Yearling Fillies
2019	66	10	33		32	28
2020	115	11	23		37	48
2021	118	13	55	66	46	55
2022	100	13	21	79	57	61
2023	97	11	33	78	48	52
2024	79	11	44	78	49	48

For the number of mares bred to New Jersey Thoroughbred stallions for the period 2021-2024, the number decreased from 55 in 2021 to 44 in 2024; a decrease of 20.0 percent. The number of registered New Jersey-Bred foals also decreased from 118 in 2021 to 79 in 2024; a decrease of 33.0 percent. This may be a reflection of the reduced number of stallions registered in the State; thirteen in 2021 to 11 in 2024.

Impact On Sire Stakes Program

Displayed in Figure 1 is the Impact on the New Jersey Sire Stakes Program.



The New Jersey Sire Stakes program has benefited well from the purse subsidies. Purses for stakes races rose from \$2.9 million in 2019 to \$4 million in 2023 and 2024; an increase of 38.0 percent.

Displayed in Table 8 are the Number of Yearlings Nominated to the New Jersey Sire Stakes Program.

Yearlings Nominated to Sire Stakes Program NJ			
Year	Number Of Yearlings	Number Of Trotters	Number Of Pacers
2019	368	*	*
2020	469	*	*
2021	605	*	*
2022	649	444	205
2023	671	427	244
2024	638	372	266

**Data Not Available For 2019-2021*

The number of yearlings nominated to the Sire Stakes Program increased from 368 in 2019 to 638 in 2024; an increase of 73.0 percent.

Impact On Training Center Metrics

Displayed in Table 9 are the metrics for the Standardbred Training Centers.

Number Of New Jersey Bred Trained Horses On SBOANJ Affiliated Training Centers By Age 2019-2024				
Year	Total 2-Year Trained (NJ Bred)	Total 3-Year Trained (NJ Bred)	Total 4-Year Trained (NJ Bred)	Total 5 Year and Older Trained (NJ Bred)
2019	44	45	31	38
2020	103	88	31	38
2021	151	93	32	46
2022	167	133	55	41
2023	207	131	52	42
2024	210	140	52	45

Reflective of the positive impact of the purse subsidy legislation, the number of New Jersey-bred horses in training increased for the period. Total 2-year olds trained increased from 44 in 2019 to 210 in 2024; an increase of 377.0 percent. Total 3-year olds trained increased from 45 to 140; an increase of 211.0 percent. Total 4-year olds trained increased from 31 to 52; an increase of 68.0 percent. Total number of older horses trained increased from 38 to 45; an increase of 18.0 percent.

Like Thoroughbred farms, Thoroughbred training centers are concentrated around the Monmouth Park Racetrack. The racetrack is heavily involved in the training process for thoroughbreds. The three largest training centers used by thoroughbred horse owners in New Jersey are Colt's Neck Training Center, Overbrook Farm, and Westampton Farm.

These training facilities offer trainers practice tracks and stalls for their horses along with several amenities including equine pools, motorized equine exercise machines, and round pens. Both Overbrook and Westampton Farms had an average of 100 horses using their facilities in 2020. Colt's Neck registered a slightly lower average of 70 horses throughout the year.

Horses at these training facilities cycle through several different locations for training throughout year. These locations included several of the thoroughbred breeding farms and the Monmouth Park Racetrack.

Displayed in Table 10 are the metrics for the Standardbred Horses Trained by Age.

Total Number of Standardbred Trained Horses at SBOANJ Affiliated Training Centers by Age 2019-2024				
Year	Total 2-Year Trained	Total 3-Year Trained	Total 4-Year Trained	Total 5-Year and Older Trained
2019	259	299	234	378
2020	428	355	213	446
2021	468	349	241	469
2022	513	384	224	491
2023	562	387	217	550
2024	584	419	241	565

Total trained Standardbred 2-year olds increased from 259 in 2019 to 584 in 2024; an increase of 125.0 percent. Total trained 3-year olds increased from 299 in 2019 to 419 in 2024; an increase of 40.0 percent. Total trained 4-year olds increased from 234 in 2019 to 241 in 2024; an increase of 3.0 percent. Total trained older horses increased from 378 in 2019 to 565 in 2024; an increase of 49.0 percent.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Under P.L. 2019, c.36, the State of New Jersey appropriates \$20 million annually to the New Jersey Racing Commission for purse subsidies, to be divided equally between the Thoroughbred and Standardbred industries. While the law mandates an equal 50/50 split between breeds, each industry has elected—by statute and longstanding practice—to allocate its portion differently in order to support the unique structure, racing calendars, and competitive needs of their respective racing programs.

Thoroughbred Allocation (Monmouth Park Only)

The Thoroughbred horsemen have elected in statute to direct 100% of their subsidy allocation to Monmouth Park’s overnight purse account. This statutory choice reflects the nature of New Jersey’s Thoroughbred program:

- New Jersey has one primary Thoroughbred racetrack, Monmouth Park.
- The Thoroughbred racing season is shorter and concentrated, requiring a single, robust purse account.
- Consolidating the entire subsidy into overnight purses maximizes the impact on field size, wagering attractiveness, and owner participation.
- As a result, the Thoroughbred share of the subsidy supports one unified purse structure, without internal subdivisions.

Standardbred Allocation (Mirroring Meadowlands and Former Freehold Purse Distribution)

The Standardbred horsemen have elected in statute to allocate their subsidy in proportion to the existing purse distribution historically used at the Meadowlands Racetrack and formerly at Freehold Raceway. This framework includes:

- 60% to Meadowlands overnight purses
- 16% to Freehold overnight purses
- 12% to New Jersey Sire Stakes purses
- 6% to New Jersey-bred purse bonuses
- 6% to New Jersey breeder awards

This approach supports multiple tracks and ensures vital funding for breeding, Sire Stakes, and New Jersey-sired incentives essential to the state’s agricultural and equine economy.

Why the Allocations Differ

The Thoroughbred program is track-centric and seasonal, while the Standardbred program is multi-track, year-round, and breeding-centric. These structural differences require distinct allocation strategies to sustain racing opportunities, preserve New Jersey farms, and stabilize purse levels. Each industry’s allocation approach is designed to maximize economic impact and advance the legislative intent behind P.L. 2019, c.36.

The differing allocation formulas—each selected by statutory election of the respective horsemen’s associations—enable the purse subsidy to support the unique operational and economic needs of both racing sectors while fulfilling the Legislature’s objectives.

MOVING FORWARD

The State of New Jersey wisely passed in 2019 P.L., c.36, which appropriated \$20 million annually from the state general fund to the New Jersey Racing Commission for the next fiscal year 2019 and the following four fiscal years. These funds were to be used as horse racing purse subsidies, split equally between Standardbred and Thoroughbred industries.

This report, supported by the horse racing community, diligently meets the requirements of reporting on the impact these funds have had on the sport treasured by many New Jersey residents.

It also emphasizes the many positive impacts the subsidies have had on metrics related to horse racing; including agricultural production and the socio-economic impact of racing in New Jersey which so many New Jersey residents value.

The State of New Jersey should continue to invest in this valued treasure of New Jersey history and a sector which generates over \$780 million in economic impact annually; similar to that of the ag biotech and golf course industries.

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Report was prepared by:

Karyn Malinowski, Ph.D. Professor Emeritus, Rutgers Equine Science Center.

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