Department of Behavioral Physiology of Livestock (460f)
Prof. Dr. Volker Stefanski

Theses (B. Sc./ M. Sc.)

on the topic

"Animal Welfare Indicators in Foals"

Project description:

As part of a DFG-funded project, non-invasive indicators for the animal welfare of foals are being developed. Changes in laterality, cognitive bias as well as ethological and physiological stress parameters from foal age to 18 months of age will be investigated in foals at the Marbach Main and State Stud (Haupt- und Landgestüt Marbach).

Research can be assigned on the following topics:

- Animal welfare of foals during the presentation at the stallion parade (Sep./Oct. 2026)
- Animal welfare of foals during weaning from the mother mares (Sep. - Nov. 2026)
- Animal welfare of foals during transportation (Nov. 2027)
- Analysis of calprotectin from fecal samples (from the end of 2026).

You can expect:

- Collaboration and organization within a large research team of the HfWU Nürtingen, the University of Hohenheim and the Main and State Stud Marbach
- Thorough orientation and training by the project team
- Data collection: Observation and documentation of foal behavior, taking fecal samples for non-invasive stress analysis in the stable and carrying out analysis tests in the laboratory
- Statistical evaluation of the collected data
- Participation in scientific presentations and publications of the project results.

We expect you to:

- Have an interest in scientific issues
- Enjoy working in a team
- Do careful, precise and reliable work as well as observe binding deadlines
- Participate actively in data collection, involving behavioral observations, taking fecal samples, laboratory analysis and data evaluation
- Be able to responsibly handle personal and scientific data
- Write project reports and final theses in publishable quality
- Contribute to the scientific presentation and documentation of research results.

If you are interested, please contact:

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