

THE NORTH AMERICAN CURLY HORSE

BONE, LEGS, and FEET

Front legs should have relatively long forearms and short, substantial cannons. Pasterns should not be too long (weakness), or too steep (lacking flexion or shock absorption), and will normally follow the angle of the shoulder. Durability and endurance are key traits common to Curly horses, and are especially evident in the strength and substance of their virtually trouble-free legs and feet. Feet and bone are large and substantial to bear a rider's weight with ease. Hooves should be thick-walled, thick-soled, open-heeled, well rounded and strong. The front and hind legs are correct and straight when viewed from fore, side or rear. Cow hocks, sickle hocks and any structural imperfections known to affect soundness are undesirable. Small degrees of toeing out behind, slight set to hocks, and other traits familiar to certain types or disciplines and functions, are to be taken into consideration. Smaller than normal or missing chestnuts (inside legs) or ergots (at point of fetlocks), thought to be primitive horse traits, occur in some Curly horses.

BODY

The withers should be prominent enough to hold a saddle on properly. The ribs will be well sprung to provide plenty of depth and capacity. Potbellies are undesirable. A Curly horse should have a short to medium, well muscled back, and a short to medium coupled loin, for strength and flexibility. The Curly should have a long underline for free athletic movement. The croup is somewhat sloping and rounded, and should display strength. The hindquarter should be proportionately long when viewed from the side, and hindquarters are well muscled without being bulky. Short or narrow hindquarters are undesirable. When viewed from the rear, the width across stifle and gaskin area should at least be as wide as the width across the hipbones.

MANE and TAIL

The manes of Curly horses shed more in spring than other breeds. They can still be long, thick, and spiraled, and when they are, they are usually split down the middle (double or split mane). When they have thinner manes, they can be quite light maned especially during shedding, and this is not undesirable. Tails are set properly, neither too low nor too high. The dock (tailhead) of a Curly horse is very often thinner haired than the rest of the tail, with shedding or breakage in that area. That is considered a trademark of the KRT25 Curly coat gene, especially in the Western bloodlines, and is not undesirable. Short and thin hair or balding down the entire length of the tail may occur in the KRT25 homozygous dominant curly gene horses (specifically in the Western bloodlines). The SP6 Coat gene Curly horses of the Eastern bloodlines have full manes and tails.

MOVEMENT

The Curly horse will display straight, efficient, athletic movement in a medium to long stride. When walking, the hind foot will typically track over or before the front footstep (creating an over stride). The trot should be naturally extended and smooth to ride. The North American Curly horse is typically a walk, trot, canter horse, however there is a distinct group of Curly Jim horses that are naturally gaited.

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This is a breed standard for the dominant gene Curly horse. The isolated dominant genes in Curly Horses are the KRT25 mutation and the SP6 mutation. ICHO also tracks and researches Curly horses with curly coats suspected of resulting from recessive coat genes. However, none have been positively identified at this time. Harmful recessive deleterious genes within the population are also tracked. The purpose of this Curly horse standard is two fold: First to identify the most highly valued Curly horse traits recognized and valued by owners and breeders (*general*), and secondly, identify basic traits consistent within the various Breed lines of Curly Horses. These traits are the essence of each line (*official standard*).



GENERAL BREED INFORMATION

GENERAL IMPRESSION:

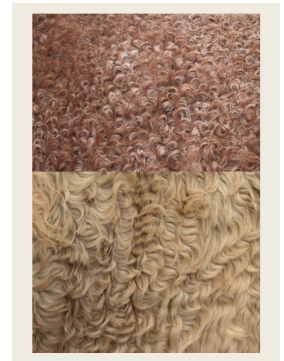
Whether in pony, miniature or in one of several saddle types, the North American Curly Horse is a very naturally successful horse. We look for a hardy, sound, well proportioned, well- balanced curly-coated horse, usually seen with a high head carriage and forward way of going with an overall desirable conformation. It will show a gentle, calm, docile demeanor, yet remain alert. It will exhibit friendliness, intelligence, and a willing, dedicated work ethic. Stallions will display masculinity and mares will display femininity. Thickness and type of muscle pattern will vary with Breed Line type, but its muscling will be ideal for the disciplines its type is best suited for.

The domestic Curly horse of today is still a horse designed more by Mother Nature than by man, since many ancestors are from the Mustang populations in Western USA and from Native American and Indigenous horse populations.

Curly Horse Breed lines- **Damele** (NV Mustang modified, KRT25), **Native/Warrior** (Crow and Sioux Native horses with QH, KRT25), **Canadian** (Alberta Wild Horse population with NV and Dakotas Curly influence with QH, KRT25), **Fredell** (presumed CO Mustang or Ute horses with QH, KRT25), **Aishihik** (Aishihik Yukon Native horses with Palouse & Nez Perce native Appaloosa horse influence, KRT25), **Salt Wells, WY** (Mustang ranch horses, KRT25), **Curly Jim** (TN Unknown Gaited Curly with MFT, the SP6 coat gene), **Damele Miniature** (KRT25), **Canadian Miniature** (KRT25), **Curly Jim Miniature** (SP6). **Curly Coat genes should not be mixed.**

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

COAT The coat is the Curly Horse's main "claim to fame." The Curly horse does have a unique curly coat. It is most obvious in winter, when its longer coat shows thick dense curls similar to sheep fleece. In summer, the Curly Horse sheds its thick curly body coat for a smoother, sleeker summer coat, which may or may not show evidence of curl. Its mane and forelock, the hair inside its ears, and often its fetlocks will typically remain conspicuously curly year round. The Curly coat is hypoallergenic for many people allergic to other horses.



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SHOW When being shown, (depending upon the discipline), Curly horses are frequently not clipped like other breeds are. The Curly horse should look good and is more characteristic when shown in its natural state. The presence of curls (inside their ears or on their fetlocks, for example) is to be viewed as exhibiting desirable Curly Horse traits, and is not to be penalized.

SIZE Curly horse saddle types are the most numerous kind of Curly horses, typically ranging from 14.1 to 15.1 hands high. However, the amazing Curly horse comes in all sizes and shapes from large draft influenced type Curly horses to Curly miniature horses in A size 34" and under to B size 34" to 38", and ponies A size 12.2 H to 9.3 H, and B size 14.2 and under to 12.3 H. Although all sizes exist and are acceptable in Curly horses, in the saddle types, the recommended maximum size is 16.2 H and 1350 Lbs to preserve their natural durability. With the widest variation in Curly Breed lines, there is a Curly Horse for everyone.

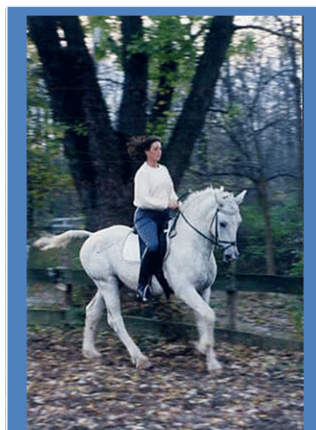
PONY HEIGHT CLARIFICATION In the general horse industry a saddle type Curly will technically be considered a pony when under 14.2 hh. Among Curly horse fanciers, since a height of 14.0 to 14.2 hh is so common, the designation of "pony" will more often refer to a pony that stands 14.0 hh or less.

COLOR There are no restrictions in color. All equine genetic coat colors, dilutes, eye colors, markings, and pigments are allowed, and probably all exist in the Curly horse - none are penalized. Dark or striated hooves (coronet ermine spotting with white socks) are desirable.

TEMPERAMENT Most horse breeds fondly claim their most intelligent or well-mannered members as being representatives of their breed. With Curly horses, the majority of them are found to be consistently highly intelligent, naturally calm, and friendly, personable horses. Curly horses are highly prized by their owners for both their peaceful dispositions and their ability and desire to use reason when frightened or challenged.

ORIGIN The KRT25 mutation -Unknown, most likely the oldest of the Curly Coat mutations in North America since it is found in the Native line horses and mustang herds. Today, there are still Curly Horses found in the wild mustang herds scattered throughout the western United States. The **SP6 mutation** was discovered in an unknown Curly horse bought at an auction in Tennessee. Most likely it is a newer mutation since it has never been found in mustang herds. There are also many unknown Curly Coat Genes that have not been isolated, Unknown Gene "a" most likely from NV mustangs, Cook gene from Damele NV horses, Unknown Sulphur Mustang coat gene, and other unknown genes in other mustang herds.

2



Damele Breed Line with Arabian influence, Sport horse type, Dressage Champion, KRT25 coat gene.

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The **OFFICIAL STANDARD** for
The **NORTH AMERICAN CURLY HORSE**

HEAD

General: Size of head will be in proportion to its body. Head will often have a somewhat strong or deep jaw. Somewhat shallow mouth (not extending much past nostrils when viewed from side), and medium to small crescent shaped nostrils are typical.

Desirable eyes are large (with soft or gentle expression), and may be somewhat elliptical in shape. Lightly to moderately hooded eyes are considered normal in Curly horses and are not penalized. Small, sunken, or pig eyes are undesirable. Small flat chins or lazy loose lips are undesirable. Long faces are common, but a head that is too big or coarse or too long is undesirable.

When viewed in profile: the bridge of nose is normally straight or slightly ram-nosed. Very convex (Roman) or very dishd faces are undesirable. "Sheep ears" are undesirable, as are overly large or coarse heads or muzzles.

When viewed from front: Face is noticeably wide between the eyes. Ears are set widely apart, and usually the tips are not heavily notched. Ears should have curly hair evident inside. Narrow faces are undesirable.

NECK

Throatlatch should be clean. Width between jaws is desirable. Length of neck will vary with type. Thickness of neck will vary with sex and bloodline, but very coarse necks or very short necks are undesirable.

The neck should be longer on topline (from straight to arched upward) and shorter on bottom line (straight underneath - a bulging underline on neck is undesirable). Neck to shoulder attachment should be smooth and clean, but neck to shoulder placement will vary among the types.



SHOULDER

Shoulders and chest are well muscled without becoming bulky. A V'd chest and a well laid back shoulder (an ideal angle is from 45 – 55 degrees) are desirable. Steep shoulders are undesirable.

3