

*Happy Holidays*



**Dear Ontario Racing Members:**

When we began 2021, the province of Ontario was under severe restrictions that continued to challenge our industry. The restrictions put in place helped keep us safe while at the same time making it difficult for so many in the horse racing industry to capitalize on their passion.

All aspects of our industry have been impacted and as a group working together, we continue to find ways to excel. The COVID-19 pandemic has not only limited our racing opportunities but has also challenged breeders, racetrack operators, trainers, owners and all who dedicate themselves to our wonderful sport.

We have responded tremendously. From breeders shifting sales online to the horse racing community embracing vaccination to ownership promotion continuing in a virtual format, we have all done what is needed in order to protect and, where possible, elevate our industry.

Even in a year dominated by a pandemic, we have experienced a great deal of success. The inaugural Heritage Series for Thoroughbreds at Woodbine and Fort Erie was well received by members and the 2021-22 Mare Purchase and Recruitment Programs are once again being embraced by breeders. Local Standardbred yearling sales recorded excellent results this fall and Ontario Sired horses also sold well in Lexington and Harrisburg. With the cooperation of COSA, the signature events of Standardbred racetracks across the province were spotlighted on COSA-TV. Ajax Downs premiered the province's first "hook race" and, once restrictions were lifted, solid wagering results for all three breeds demonstrated a desire for our product.

Thank you for your continued dedication. Your efforts in these trying times keep our industry going and position the sport well for an exciting future.

The Ontario Racing Board of Directors and Ontario Racing Management staff looks forward to collaborating with our members as we continue to explore ways to sustain horse racing in Ontario.

**I wish you and yours a happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year, one filled with success, happiness and good health.**

John Hayes  
Chair, Ontario Racing



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