



Summary GEHNA Launch Meeting – March 12, 2025

- **General Atmosphere:** positive; strong interest in global collaboration between scientists, companies, and industry bodies.

Mission & Vision Key Objectives

GEHNA's mission: to promote global unification and harmonization of practices in equine health and nutrition. It aims to foster a collaborative environment that drives impactful research and aligned practices, enhancing the health, care, and performance of horses worldwide.

GEHNA's proposed Vision: Our vision is to establish a unified global standard for equine nutrition, optimizing the nutrition, health, care, and performance of horses worldwide.

GEHNA's Key objectives: To address these challenges, the Global Equine Health and Nutrition Association (GEHNA) aims to:

- Global Alignment and Standards:
- Drive a unified global effort to align and elevate standards in equine health and nutrition.
- Collaborative Research and Development:
- Support and initiate projects addressing critical issues in equine nutrition and health. Promote global alignment and ultimately the harmonization of standards and best practices.
- Facilitation of Knowledge Transfer:
- Organize collaborative meetings at prominent equine events, including EEHNC and KER Conferences.
- Collaborate with the global equine scientific community to advance impactful initiatives.
- Dissemination of Knowledge:
- Share research findings and best practices through an open and collaborative network of members and stakeholders.

Positioning within the equine industry and scientific communities

- GEHNA aims for a good relationship with BETA and other Feed Associations
- GEHNA aims for a relationship with ESS & EWEN and other equine science congresses

Proposed structure

The proposed structure of GEHNA's organization was presented (Fig 1)

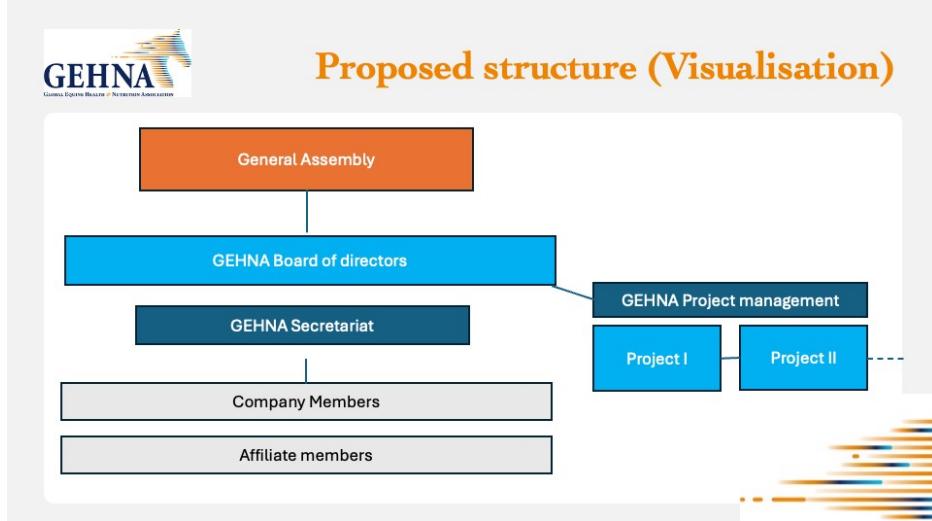


Fig 1. Proposed GEHNA structure

Main Objectives Discussed:

- Structuring **membership models**: Different fees depending on company size, possibly offering voting power relative to investment
 - Keeping **communication strategies** in mind (**End-users**) – showing clear value to justify membership fees.
- Creating a **collaborative platform** linking global players, academia, and industry, including small companies.
- Building a **global forage database** linked with analysis methods to standardize and align results.
- Improving **feed evaluation systems** and creating **global consensus statements** on nutrition (e.g., starch and sugar recommendations).
- Encouraging **in vivo/in vitro research** on digestibility and **nutrient metabolism gaps**.
- Launching **joint research projects** in critical areas (e.g., mineral metabolism, sustainability metrics, NRC requirement gaps).
- Ensuring **peer review before dissemination** to avoid misinformation (concern over preprints and pre-publication dissemination).
- Including broader issues like **welfare** but being careful to manage the scope.

Main Outcomes of the GEHNA Launch Meeting (March 12, 2025)

- Offer a Bronze sponsor package with access to a collaborative platform connecting global players, academia, and industry, including smaller companies.
- Recognize the need for an international voice on equine nutrition with a global perspective.



- Express interest in launching collaborative projects and creating a shared knowledge platform.

Essential Points to Discuss Further:

1. **Forage Database Development:**
 - Feasibility, methods for analysis, linking data to calculation methods.
 - Ownership, access rights, and update mechanisms.
2. **Feed Evaluation Systems:**
 - Agreement on methodologies.
 - Global calibration standards (e.g., NIRs).
3. **Membership and Sponsorship Models:**
 - Tiered membership (smaller companies vs. larger investors).
 - Decision-making linked to sponsorship levels (more money = more votes?).
 - Reducing fees to allow more global inclusion.
4. **Research Priorities:**
 - Focus areas like NRC gaps, mineral metabolism, and sustainability metrics.
 - How to prioritize projects democratically among members.
5. **Publication and Data Sharing:**
 - Peer review before information is published.
 - Deciding how internal and public communications will be handled.
6. **International Regulatory Harmonization:**
 - Lobbying for updated and harmonized regulations through GEHNA on specific (global) topics.
7. **Long-Term Vision and Launch Planning:**
 - Timeline toward the next GEHNA-meeting (target: KER 2026).
 - Milestones and interim deliverables.
8. **Risk Management:**
 - Managing commercial interests vs. open collaboration.
 - Preventing dominance by the largest companies.

Key Actions and Considerations for the GEHNA Initiative put forward in launch meeting:

1. **Redefine Define sponsor packages & Develop Clear Communication Material:**
 - Create communication showing the *value proposition* for companies to justify their sponsorship.
 - Create “Wordpress based” website that functions as portal
2. **Define the Organizational Structure:**
 - Clarify membership levels, governance, voting rights, and fees.



- Invoicing
- 3. **Create a (Scientific Advisory) Board:**
 - Gather experts from different regions (Europe, US, Australia, etc.) to align methodologies and define research priorities.
- 4. **Shared Knowledge - legacy**
 - Develop a unified knowledge-sharing platform.
 - Enhance collaboration by establishing a university and research portal to engage academic and industry partners.
 - Launch pilot projects that deliver measurable value.
 - Possibly a smaller forage database or joint review paper to showcase collaboration value at low cost.
- 5. **Engage Academia and Industry Together:**
 - Define initial working groups mixing scientists and company representatives.
- 6. **Prepare for the Next Meeting:**
 - Plan a structured agenda for KER 2026, including preliminary findings or agreement