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## The History of BEFRED

In the middle 1990's it became apparent that many equine undergraduates were researching aspects of equines and the equine industry, that their results were deposited in the institution library and very few other people outside of the institution gained any benefit. As a consequence, there were many instances of students, in other establishments, 'reinventing the wheel' when they could have been extending the previous work. Similarly, this work was not freely available to those in the equine who may have benefited most.

As a consequence, Graham and Arne Suggett, with the strong support of Pat Harris, wrote, developed and ran a web-based database in which this undergraduate research work could be made universally available at no charge.

This database was launched in 1999, with data included from 1995, as the World Undergraduate Equine Research Database (**WUERD**).

Bearing in mind the limits of the computers at that time the data provided about each thesis in addition to Name, Title of thesis, Year and Institution was limited to under 200 words and much of the data was transferred either by cut and paste methods or re-typing.

WUERD was a success and by July 2000 was getting some 3,500 hits per month. However, the time and finance required to maintain the ever-growing site proved to be prohibitive. Weatherby's stepped in to run the site but, due to staff and policy changes, this did not prove to be possible and, apart from up-dating with about ten theses per year from entrants in the Eqvalan Duo Thesis of the Year competition, the site remained static.

In 2006, there were two significant events: - the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) included Research and Education in the portfolio of the Director of Equine Development and WUERD was given to BEF by Weatherby's. The BEF has invested in a complete re-write, made the transfer of data from institutions extremely simple, included research at masters, doctor and post-doctoral level and, consequently, renamed the database the British Equestrian Federation Researching Equine Database (**BEFRED**).