

Proud farmers

Horses in Rhineland agriculture

In the 19th century, a variety of horse breeds were kept in the Rhineland. These included the 'Eifel breed', which was characterised by its stocky build and high resilience.

In the second half of the century, stronger horses became necessary for intensive agriculture, which required deeper ploughing. From 1878 onwards, the Euskirchen Horse Breeding Association worked to develop the 'Rhenish horse' as a uniform breed: 'a strong, well-built Coldblood' – as it was described in the 1898 handbook for Rhenish farmers. State stud farms also promoted breeding efforts.

Horses were faster than oxen at field work, but more expensive to maintain and therefore a status symbol for farmers. During the First World War, owning horses became a disadvantage, as many had to be handed over for military service.