



PRESS RELEASE

Equine Care Group and Salado Equine Medical Center join forces, marking ECG's expansion into the United States

Lummen, Belgium, and Salado, Texas, USA – April 8, 2026

A Landmark Transatlantic Partnership Advancing Equine Healthcare Worldwide

Equine Care Group ("ECG") and Salado Equine Medical Center ("SEMC") are proud to announce a **long-term strategic partnership**, marking **ECG's expansion into the United States** and an important milestone in its international growth.

This partnership **brings together leading equine teams**, united by a shared ambition to **advance equine healthcare** and continuously **raise the standards of veterinary medicine worldwide**. By combining complementary expertise across continents, ECG and SEMC create a powerful **transatlantic platform that accelerates the exchange of knowledge, innovation, and advanced clinical practices**.

Together, they aim to unite top equine professionals, strengthen collaboration, and drive meaningful impact across the equine healthcare industry. **Guided by science, driven by excellence, and led by veterinarians**, this partnership will contribute to scientific progress and **further improve equine welfare on a global scale**.

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Dr. Tom Mariën, co-founder and CEO of Equine Care Group:

*"We are incredibly proud to welcome **Dr. Whitaker and Dr. Janicek** as our first partners in the United States. This marks **a defining milestone for Equine Care Group** and an important step in our long-term vision to **build a truly global, veterinarian-led network**.*

*We strongly believe the U.S. market is ready for a model that **prioritizes collaboration, reinforces medical leadership, and keeps veterinarians at the center**. This approach can **elevate the profession, enhance quality of care, and drive meaningful progress across the equine healthcare sector**.*

*This first partnership is therefore particularly meaningful. **Salado Equine Medical Center** will always hold a special place within our Group as the starting point of our journey in the United States."*

Dr. Beau Whitaker & Dr. John Janicek, Salado Equine Medical Center:

*"From the very first discussions, it was clear that Equine Care Group **shares our values and our vision for the future of equine medicine**.*

*This partnership creates a unique opportunity to combine **strong local excellence with global collaboration**. It will not change who we are—it will **strengthen what we have built**, while giving us access to a broader international network of expertise, innovation, and shared knowledge. **Importantly, it is built on a long-term partnership model that preserves our identity and clinical autonomy**.*

***Equine Care Group brings together like-minded veterinarians** who are committed to continuous learning and advancing the profession. That alignment made this a natural fit.*

***By joining ECG, we will further enhance our ability to manage complex cases, expand international knowledge exchange, and continue pushing the boundaries of equine healthcare**.*

*Most importantly, **our commitment remains unchanged—to our clients, our referring veterinarians, our team, and the next generation of equine veterinarians**. We will continue to operate with the same values, culture, and dedication, now **strengthened by a global community of leading professionals**."*



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A VETERINARIAN-LED MODEL: A DIFFERENT APPROACH FOR THE U.S. MARKET

Equine Care Group is built on a fundamentally different philosophy: a veterinarian-led model, **created by veterinarians, for veterinarians.**

In a landscape where parts of the veterinary sector have become increasingly corporate-driven – often prioritising financial performance and operational standardisation – **ECG represents an alternative approach.** One where **medical leadership remains in the hands of clinicians,** and where decisions are guided first and foremost by **quality of care, long-term vision, and professional integrity.**

ECG's model is different: it is built on **partnership,** not acquisition. On **collaboration,** not control. On strengthening existing teams, not replacing them.

For Salado Equine Medical Center, this means **gaining access to a global network of expertise, innovation, and shared knowledge** – while fully **preserving its identity, culture, and clinical autonomy.**

For the broader U.S. market, it introduces a model that reinforces the role of veterinarians, supports the next generation, and creates an environment where **excellence is driven from within the profession itself.**

This is not a consolidation strategy.

It is a **long-term commitment to the future of equine medicine.**



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ABOUT EQUINE CARE GROUP:

Equine Care Group (ECG), founded in 2021, is a veterinarian-led global equine healthcare network with a clear mission: to improve the health and welfare of horses worldwide. ECG unites leading equine hospitals, practices, specialists, and supporting services within one collaborative ecosystem, combining expertise across disciplines to deliver high-quality, comprehensive care.

Built by veterinarians, for veterinarians, ECG is committed to preserving medical leadership in the hands of clinicians, while creating an environment where collaboration, innovation, research, and education can thrive.

With a **strong presence across Europe, activities in more than 70 countries worldwide**, and ongoing international expansion, **ECG is building a truly global network of excellence** –shaping the future of equine medicine **through collaboration, innovation, and a relentless focus on quality and impact.**

Website: www.equinecaregroup.com



ABOUT SALADO EQUINE MEDICAL CENTER:

Salado Equine Medical Center is recognized as one of the **leading equine referral centers in Texas**, combining advanced surgical expertise with a comprehensive range of high-level services.

Renowned for its excellence in sports medicine, complex surgery, and advanced diagnostics, the clinic has built a strong reputation for managing demanding cases and delivering outstanding clinical outcomes. **Supported by modern infrastructure and a highly skilled veterinary team**, the practice stands at the forefront of equine medicine in the region.

The clinic is led by **Dr. Beau Whitaker, DVM, CERP**, a specialist in sports medicine and performance-related care, and **Dr. John Janicek, DVM, MS, DACVS**, a board-certified equine surgeon internationally **recognized** for advanced procedures such as Wobbler's surgeries and intervertebral foraminotomies. Together, they lead a team of more than 45 professionals, combining clinical excellence with strong academic involvement and a continuous commitment to innovation.

Website: <http://www.saladoemc.com>