

NEWS

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Contact: Vicki Bendure, APR
Bendure Communications, Inc.
Vicki@bendurepr.com
202-374-9259 c

Virginia Gold Cup will Run on Great Meadow Racecourse with Improved Irrigation System on May 2

WARRENTON, Va., April 23, 2026—When the 101st Virginia Gold Cup races get underway on Saturday, May 2, horses will be running on an improved racecourse, thanks to the Great Meadow Foundation. A year ago, Great Meadow Foundation set out to improve the capacity of their irrigation system for the racecourse and drilled another well. The new well produces more than 180 gallons per minute and is in addition to the existing well.

Great Meadow Foundation then added water reels to total five that can be run simultaneously, along with soaker hoses in turns. The system has been running since the beginning of April and a very well-watered racecourse is awaiting the big day on May 2.

“We are delighted that Great Meadow has stepped up and made this dramatic improvement for the safety of our horses and riders,” said Virginia Gold Cup Race Co-Chair Al Griffin.

Gates open on May 2 at 10 a.m. with “weiner dog” races in the paddock at 11 a.m. The tailgate contest begins at noon followed by the National Anthem and color guard pre-race at 12:30 p.m. The first of seven races gets underway at 1 p.m.

Tickets are available at www.vagoldcup.com. Tailgate packages, boxes and Members Hill entertaining tents are also available. And there’s a special [1922 VIP Club](#) that’s all inclusive with rail side views, food and drink, and a D.J.

Great Meadow is located just 45 minutes west of Washington, D.C. and 30 minutes from Dulles International Airport. To get there from Washington, D.C., take I-66 west to The Plains exit. Turn left at the end of the ramp onto The Plains Road (Route 245 south), follow signs to Great Meadow which will be on your left. Call 540-347-2612 for additional information or visit the web site at www.vagoldcup.com.

The 2026 Virginia Gold Cup Races are presented by Virginia Equine Alliance, VHBPA, Brown Advisory, Virginia Thoroughbred Association, Anglicotech, Land Rover, Turkish Airlines and UVA Health.

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About Virginia Gold Cup Association

The organization oversees and handles all logistics for the Virginia Gold Cup (spring race) and International Gold Cup (fall race). The two prestigious events are two of the largest and oldest race meets in the U.S. that attract tens of thousands of spectators annually who gather at lavish tailgates or network in corporate tents. Held annually at Great Meadow in The Plains, Va., the races are located in the heart of spectacular Virginia horse country and attract the finest horses, jockeys and trainers and feature sanctioned parimutuel wagering. Held just 45 minutes west of Washington, D.C., the races attract a wide array of attendees including politicians, celebrities and other VIPs. Visit www.vagoldcup.com for more information.



Photo in this link, courtesy of Great Meadow Foundation:
<https://share.icloud.com/photos/0eawq2Rz59CdvQtYNxwnt3bVQ>