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Be sure to subscribe to the Better Horses Newspaper

Welcome to the Summer Edition of Better Horses!

Special thanks for all who subscribe to the Better Horses Newspaper. To get yours delivered, see below on this page for more details.

As we talked about last quarter, Better Horses is pleased to announce our television show is now airing on the streaming channel Equus Television Network. ([www.equustelevision.com](http://www.equustelelevision.com))

As you know, Better Horses is excited to report on the many great horse show events, so enjoy the information on the upcoming American Royal for 2023. Be sure to check out the calendar of events and look for Better Horses Television coverage of the American Royal coming this fall.

Better Horses was honored to attend this year's Missouri State Fair kick off dinner. Located in Sedalia, Missouri, the Missouri State Fair begins August 10th and runs through the 20th with events such as; MRCA Rodeos, Cowboy Mounted Shooting, Draft Horse Hitches, and Bull Riding. It's great fun with many family events to attend. (www.mostatefairgrounds.com)

Looking for something new to do with your horse? Come take a ride with hundreds of horses at the 7th Annual Kansas City Cowboys for Cops downtown trail ride Friday, July 21st beginning at 8:30am. It's a great time while supporting Law Enforcement.

On a personal note: Working with horses and running a boarding barn (www.silvertoothstables.com) we are always reminded injuries are a part of training. When two of my four horses were injured last month it immediately caused me to pivot from my competitive obligations.

After reassessing my situation, I wanted to know the most common ways a horse gets injured.

Below are the most common horse injuries and their cause:

- Inappropriate warm-up or stretching.
- Inadequate or inefficient patterns of movement.
- Excessive range of motion of a particular joint.
- A high magnitude of acceleration or deceleration.
- Excessive duration of activity.
- Extreme impact forces placed on body parts making contact with a surface or object.

Thank you again for reading, watching and listening to Better Horses.

Ride safe and we'll see you soon.



**Better Horses TV with
Ed Adams and Susie Arbo**



**Better Horses Radio with
Ron McDaniel, Ernie Rodina
and Dawn Dawson**

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American Royal

A Kansas City tradition since 1899, the American Royal is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to be the nation's leader for food and agriculture education, events, and engagement. The American Royal provides opportunities for nearly half a million youth and adults from around the world to engage in high-quality events and experiences, including nationally competitive livestock shows, the world's largest barbecue competition, regional and national equine shows, youth and professional rodeos, and elementary and secondary education outreach. Support from partners, members, and volunteers help the American Royal achieve its vision of a world where food and agriculture are celebrated, and all generations are committed to its future.

The first official American Royal Horse Show occurred in 1905 with the help of prominent horse trainer Tom Bass.



The following year, Loula Long Combs performed in her first American Royal horse show. Loula came from a prominent Kansas City family known for owning some of the best horses in the country. Both Tom Bass and Loula Long Combs became



prominent figures of the American Royal Horse Show. She was often greeted with a standing ovation when entering the ring on her phaeton with two of her Boston bulldogs riding with her. Loula continued to compete for over 50 years at the horse show, often

Tom Bass was a former slave who became a world-famous rider and trainer of fine show horses. At a young age Bass became known for his skill with and knowledge of horses. Bass rode before presidents and royalty and represented Missouri at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. He invented the "Bass bit," a horse bit that prevented the abuse of horses during training.

winning. Today the American Royal features several horse shows varying from local competitors to nationally renowned trainers and stables.

The two most recent events to be added to the American Royal season are the rodeo and barbecue contest. In 1949 the first American Royal Rodeo was held in conjunction with the first dairy show during the spring. The dairy show and the rodeo were discontinued in 1951, but the rodeo made a comeback in 1965 and remained the spring activity. The rodeo moved to the fall season in 1976 with the first American Royal PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association) sanctioned rodeo. The first American Royal Barbecue contest was held in 1980 and quickly grew in popularity. In 1998, it officially became the "The World's Largest Barbecue" with over 340 teams competing.



The education programs were approached with renewed vigor in the 1980s. The American Royal Queen Contest was discontinued after the 1988 season, and became the American Royal Student Ambassadors program. One male and one female student were selected to represent the American Royal and applications were originally restricted to only FFA members. Today, students are chosen from all over the country who exemplify the American Royal through scholarship, leadership and advocacy for the food and fiber industry.



For over 100 years, the American Royal has been a part of Kansas City history, through multiple buildings and the addition of multiple events and programs, The Royal has transformed into what it is today. The American Royal continues as a Kansas City tradition offering competition to youth and adults from around the country who attend the events and educational programs.

An opportunity does exist to build a state-of-the-art agriculture showcase and learning environment. This is to establish a revitalized American Royal as the go-to-place for food and agriculture. In 2016 the American Royal announced its relocation to Wyandotte County, Kansas. Since then, the American Royal has embarked on a mission to create a new experience for everyone. (www.americanroyal.com)





2023 AMERICAN ROYAL ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

The Royal Showcase - A Youth & Open Horse Show.....	Aug. 5-6
Cutting Horse Show.....	Aug. 25-27
Arabian Horse Show.....	Sept. 2-3
Quarter Horse Show	Sept. 6-10
Sporting Clays Challenge	Sept. 21
World Series of Barbecue®	Sept. 27 - Oct. 1
Livestock Show.....	Oct. 4-22
Junior Premium Livestock Auction.....	Oct. 14
4-H/FFA Livestock Judging.....	Oct. 15
Collegiate Meats Judging.....	Oct. 15
Collegiate Livestock Judging.....	Oct. 16
4-H Meats Judging.....	Oct. 17-18
Fall Field Trip.....	Oct. 19-20
BOTAR Ball.....	Oct. 28
UPHA National Championship Horse Show.....	Nov. 6-11
Crops Contest.....	Nov. 13-14
Uptown Hoedown.....	Dec. 2
Holiday Pop-Up Bar.....	Dec. 7-9 & 14-16

ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE. VISIT AMERICANROYAL.COM FOR CURRENT TIMES & DETAILS



WE EXIST TO CHAMPION FOOD AND AGRICULTURE.

Kansas City Cowboys for Cops

The 7th Annual Kansas City Downtown Trail Ride Set for Friday, July 21, 2023



In the summer of 2016, a group of cowboys and cowgirls gathered in Texas and rode their horses nine miles to their local county courthouse located in Waller County, Texas, to honor officers who gave their lives in the line of duty.

Why ride with KC Cowboys for Cops? Here in Kansas City, on March 1, 2023 at 9:30pm, tactical response officers were executing a search warrant in the 2300 block of Blue Ridge Blvd. While executing the warrant, officers came under gunfire and immediately returned fire. During this exchange, three officers, Officer Nick McQuillen, Officer Chris Wheeler, Officer James Oakes, were shot and immediately transported to an area hospital and treated for non-life-threatening injuries. Once notified, the Jackson County Sheriff's Mounted Posse responded.

Captain Ed Adams and Deputy Kelly Sitter-McComb of the Jackson County Sheriff's Mounted Posse (www.jcsmp.org), along with the



Captain Joey Roberts presents to Officer James Oakes, Chris Wheeler, and Nick McQuillen financial donations from the Sheriff's Mounted Posse.

Kansas City Police Department once again respond by calling out a ride of solidarity known as "Kansas City Cowboys for Cops".

The goal is to call out every cowboy and cowgirl to come together to ride and show support for local Law Enforcement Officers. Kansas City with its "Old West" traditions and thriving equine industry was a perfect place to host this event. It will raise money for the Posse 100, a fund established for first responders and their families in times of need.

After two years riding downtown in Oak Grove, Missouri, The Jackson County Sheriff's Department and the Kansas City Police Department are proud to bring the riders back to downtown KC. The KCPD Patrol, followed by the Jackson County Sheriff's Mounted Posse, will lead a vast group of horses through downtown Kansas City. KCPD Traffic Control will provide a rolling police escort. The route begins at Kemper Arena, riding to National WWI Museum.

At the National WWI Museum (www.theworldwar.org) Deputy McComb was put in contact with event organizer, Isabel. As expected, they welcomed the event with open arms and the destination is set.

Sheriff Darryl Forte and the Jackson County Sheriff's Department will host and sponsor the event. The staging area will be at the Kemper Arena. Check the Facebook event page prior to July 21, 2023 for updated information. Restrooms,



street sweepers, trash canisters and cleanup for all of the horses are provided by Gale Holsman – CEO of American Companies (www.americancompanieskc.com) who plans to follow the herd of horses to its destination. Donations are welcome from businesses and individuals who come in!

Gates to the parking lot open at 6:30 a.m. with rigs expecting to pull in steadily until 9:00 a.m.

At 9:30 am, hundreds of horseback riders will ride out of the gates of Kemper Arena.

Historically attendees drove as far as Texas and South Dakota to ride. The youngest rider was three years old and the oldest rider was 78. Rodeo cowboys, horse trainers, farriers, hunter jumpers, pony clubs, barrel racers, trick riders, inner city saddle club members, other counties with Sheriff's Posses are welcome to join in. Service members and off duty police officers were also on horseback. All breeds and all sizes from ponies to drafts, stock horses and gaited horses were ridden.

The KCPD Unit will lead a steady pace followed by the Jackson County

Sheriff's Mounted Posse. Keeping the group together in a steady flow with little gaps between riders keep horses confident and comfortable. Support vehicles carrying extra gear and water for the riders and horses will be available for a round trip route of 4.2 miles.

It's the perfect event for rounding out your horse or training for parades.

The event encourages all equestrians to saddle up this year for the 2023 Kansas City Cowboys for Cops "Downtown Trail Ride"!

Come ride with us and show support for our Law Enforcement Officers! For more information about our event or to donate to the Jackson County Sheriff's Mounted Posse 100 fund please see the website (www.jcsmp.org) and hit the donate button or the Facebook page "Kansas City Cowboys for Cops". Contact Deputy Kelly Sitter-McComb at (816) 547-9508 or email kelsitterdowns@gmail.com



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WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED METHOD FOR USING A WEDGE?

by Lee Olsen, Equine Hoof Care

What is your preferred method for using a wedge?



Here are a few examples of the different methods for using a wedge. We will use a wedge without frog support periodically but usually if the hoof needs a wedge, there is a good reason why!

Just adding an open heeled wedge shoe can immediately help the palmar angle and it can work for a while, but you can have more problems down the road. Example: putting more pressure on an already stressed heel. Usually when you need to apply a wedge it is because there is something wrong with the heels, digital cushion and/or the entire hoof. By adding frog/heel support, you now have the ability to float and load the heels which will help and promote healthier heel growth.

Where things get tricky is when the horse is a performance horse in a speed event such as barrel racing, team roping, etc. Some packages can become too bulky and riders will complain about their horses becoming

slow footed/heavy in their front end. Losing shoes can also be an issue as well on those horses.

For example, the shoe in the center of the collage is that of a PRCA head horse that was lame with sore heels. When we first met, it was wearing an open heeled aluminum wedge shoe. We applied a full wedge pad with frog support and floated the heels. The horse went pretty much instantly sound and did well for several months. When the horse went back to rodeoing they were of course going fast and pulling shoes became an issue. So we modified a St. Croix Advantage Aluminum Wedge shoe into a heart bar by welding in a frog plate which still allowed us to float the heels and transfer the load to the frog/rest of the hoof. The horse did outstanding in that package! Shoe loss pretty much stopped and they went on later to win the average at the National Finals Rodeo!

That was just one instance. As for the rest of the packages, there is a story and a reason for every shoe. Every horse, every situation, is a little bit different. We believe that if you want to be able to help every horse that you meet, you need to be able to adapt to that individual situation.

“Be stubborn about your goals and flexible about your methods.”



Horse Insurance Fundamentals

Is Horse Insurance Worth It?

By: Amy J. Daum Broadstone Equine Insurance Agency

Horse health insurance falls way to the bottom of the list of topics any horse owner wants to discuss. Discussing worst-case scenarios doesn't make for enjoyable barn aisle or ringside small talk.

Unfortunately, as in many areas of life, what you don't know can hurt you. In the interest of helping you protect your investments, especially in these tough economic times, here is some information that might help you consider putting “Get Horse Insurance” on your to-do list.

Equine Insurance Basics

The basic idea behind insurance is that you are paying a fee to an insurance company to transfer your risk of loss to them. Your burden of payment is significantly less than the amount the company has agreed to pay if such a loss happens.

Insurance can be a cost-effective way to mitigate your risk if you cannot afford to replace your horse in the event of a loss or the costs of veterinary care for a severe illness or injury.

For many of us, horses are our best friends, and we do not want to be in a situation where financial considerations dictate the quality of care. Even if you have the funds to absorb these losses, you may still choose to invest each year on horse insurance premiums so you are not forced to tap into your savings if the unexpected happens. When it comes to horse insurance, there are several options. The two most common are Full Mortality and Major Medical/

Surgical.

Full Mortality Insurance

The equine Full Mortality policy is your horse's equivalent of life insurance. It provides coverage if the insured horse dies or is humanely put to sleep due to a covered accident, injury, illness, or disease and usually has limited coverage for theft. Full Mortality coverage is available for horses aged 24 hours up to 20 years old, depending on the insurance company. Premiums are based on the horse's age, breed, use, level, and insured value.

What Does Full Mortality Horse Insurance Cost?

The rates for Full Mortality coverage for the average pleasure or competition horse—uses that would include English/Western Show, Dressage, Hunter/Jumper, Cutting, Reining, Roping, Barrels—ages 1–15 years, generally range from 2.9–3.6% of the horse's insured value. So the Mortality premium for a horse insured at \$10,000 would average between \$290 – \$360 a year. Rates for some uses, such as eventing, fox hunting, and endurance, are usually slightly higher due to increased risk of injury.

Colic Surgery Coverage

Typically Mortality policies include Emergency Colic Surgery coverage between \$2,500-\$5,000, depending on the horse's insured value and the insurance company. It's estimated that 900,000 horses colic annually in the U.S.

What Isn't Covered By Full Mortality Insurance?

Full Mortality coverage is comprehensive, but exact coverage terms vary by company. Standard exclusions (reasons a claim could be denied) include pre-existing conditions, purposely harming the horse, not utilizing the services of a licensed veterinarian, late reporting of a loss, failure to meet the company's requirements after the loss, and some pretty far-fetched possibilities such as war, destruction of the horse due to government order, and nuclear radiation.

Major Medical and Surgical Horse Insurance

This is the most popular coverage horse owners add to their Mortality policy and is not available on a standalone basis. It helps reimburse for covered medical and surgical expenses if the horse suffers a covered accident, injury, illness, or disease during the policy period.

What Does Major Medical Horse Insurance Cost?

For as little as \$200 annually, Major Medical can provide an aggregate limit of \$5,000 for the policy period, with deductibles as low as \$300 per claim. Higher annual limits of \$7,500, \$10,000, \$12,500, and \$15,000 are available with many companies, with varying deductibles and annual premiums ranging from \$300 to \$675 or higher.

What is Covered by Major Medical Insurance?

If your horse is colicking, founders, runs through a fence, gets kicked, develops a lameness, or suffers any of the other countless injuries or illnesses that can keep you up at night, Major Medical should help reimburse for covered expenses

after the deductible is met. The coverage details vary depending on the insurance company, so ask your horse insurance specialist about exclusions, co-pays, treatment time limits, and extension periods.

What Isn't Covered By Major Medical Insurance?

Major Medical does not provide for routine health maintenance or preventative care such as vaccinations, deworming, dental or farrier care. Other standard exclusions can include pre-existing conditions, elective or cosmetic surgery, performance-enhancing treatments, joint injections, integrative therapies, the veterinarian's call charge, or transportation costs.

Major Medical Insurance for Pleasure Horses

Think your horse wouldn't be a candidate for Major Medical because he is a pleasure horse, or you only paid a couple of hundred dollars for him? While some companies will not offer coverage on lower-valued horses, a few do not have restrictions on the amount of Major Medical coverage they offer, regardless of the horse's insured value on the Mortality policy.

Cautions for Horse Health Insurance Policies

Horse insurance is very different from human health insurance. For example, pre-existing conditions are not covered, even if the horse was insured when it first contracted the disease or condition. For instance, if your horse develops a lameness or requires colic surgery while insured, expect to see an exclusion for that health issue on the following year's policy. This is because the policies are reviewed and underwritten each year. Therefore, the condition

would be considered pre-existing and excluded from the new policy. However, there are typically extension periods built into the policy for issues that continue beyond the original policy's expiration.

You must contact the insurance company as soon as a health issue presents itself. The policy requires it, and you could jeopardize your coverage if you fail to report the problem promptly. The claims adjuster will explain the coverage in detail, allowing you to plan with your vet appropriately.

Picking the Right Horse Insurance Specialists

Deciding what coverage to purchase is quite important. While the basics are similar, the coverage varies depending on the insurance company. The number of U.S. insurance companies offering horse health insurance policies doesn't even reach double digits. However, there are many insurance agencies. Here are some important considerations when picking the right company and policy:

- Consider cost and coverage.
- Find a specialist who will answer

your questions promptly.

- Find an agent who is an experienced horse person.
- Ask about 24/7 emergency contact availability.

Peace of Mind for Your Horse

There is no doubt that pondering all the worst-case scenarios of horse ownership is uncomfortable at best, which is another reason to consider insurance. Knowing that you're covered in case of the unthinkable buys you more than financial security—it also gives you peace of mind.



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How Safe is Bute for Horses Long-term?

“Bute” or phenylbutazone, is a prescription medication that should only be given for short periods of time. Phenylbutazone is classified as a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID).

Many owners of horses with osteoarthritis will give their horses bute every day to ease stiffness and pain. However, bute can have harmful side effects on both the horse’s gastrointestinal system and the kidneys. Therefore, it is recommended to consider other, safer methods to help control pain or joint discomfort instead of administering bute long-term.

Alternatives to Giving Horses Bute Long-term

It’s important to consider all aspects of your horse’s management and consult your veterinarian to figure out a situation that makes your horse comfortable and keeps you in the saddle as long as possible.

Management Recommendations

- Light daily exercise.
- Reduce repetitive activities, such as lunging on a small circle.
- Include long warm-ups and cool-downs.
- Have your horse turned out in pasture as much as possible to encourage movement.
- Corrective shoeing.
- Keep your horse at his ideal body condition score so he’s not packing unnecessary pounds.
- Consider cutting back on the level of difficulty in your horse’s training.

Prescription Medications or Regenerative Therapies

Your veterinarian may recommend putting your horse on a regimen of prescription medications for long term treatment and management. Talk with your veterinarian about joint injections (steroids), intramuscular injections (IM, such as Adequan®), and/or a hyaluronic acid product (like Legend®) which may be helpful.

An alternative to steroids that have a longer duration of action are biologic or regenerative therapies. These are products derived from your horse’s own blood or tissue and include PRP (platelet-rich plasma), IRAP (interleukin receptor antagonist protein), ProStride® (a combination of PRP and IRAP), and stem cells.

Supplements That May Support a Normal Inflammatory Response

Consider some non-prescription ingredients commonly included in joint supplement formulas to help manage the discomfort associated with your horse’s condition, such as:

- MSM
- Collagen
- Glucosamine
- Chondroitin sulfate
- Hyaluronic Acid
- Omega-3 fatty acids
- Cetyl Myristoleate
- Herbs such as devil’s claw, turmeric, yucca, jiaogulan, and Boswellia

Note: if you compete, you need to check your organization’s drugs and medications rules. Some ingredients are restricted or even outright prohibited.

Supplementing with the joint’s natural building blocks (glucosamine, chondroitin sulfate and hyaluronic acid) has not only been shown to help in the normal production of cartilage and joint fluid, but also inhibits enzymes that cause tissue breakdown and destruction. To learn more about research-backed joint health formulas, read the article “Understanding ingredients in your horse’s joint supplements.”

Non-Invasive Therapies

Non-invasive alternative treatments may be beneficial in reducing pain and inflammation while improving range of motion. Some options for alternative therapies include:

- Acupuncture or acupressure (based on ancient Chinese Medicine techniques).
- Shock wave therapy to stimulate healing of soft tissue and bone.
- Passive range of motion exercises (stretches).
- Magnetic therapy such as PEMF

blankets.

- Applying cold therapy to reduce pain and inflammation.
- Heat therapy to relax tight soft tissue.

Hopefully by combining a variety of treatments, you might need bute or other NSAIDs only occasionally if your horse’s arthritis flares up!



Pursuing The Pre-Purchase Exam

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(816) 779-0100
www.wilhiteandfrees.com

You've been shopping around for a while and have finally found the perfect horse. He's got a great personality, is well-trained, and is in your price range. You're ready to hook up the trailer to go pick him up when a friend suggests you have a vet look at him. Do you make the purchase or pursue the vet visit?

As an equine veterinarian and horse owner myself, I highly recommend you pursue the "pre-purchase exam." I have seen a pre-purchase save a buyer from purchasing a horse with significant health problems on multiple occasions. Just because the horse checks a lot of your boxes does not mean he will hold up over time or be the horse you wanted and needed.

When selecting the veterinarian to perform the pre-purchase exam, it is important that he/she is impartial. This usually means that the vet has never met or worked with the sellers or the horse before. If the vet does know the horse, they may ask you to sign a form acknowledging this. I also recommend someone who is specifically an equine veterinarian as

they generally have more experience performing these exams. The vet is employed by the buyer and reports all findings directly to the buyer. It is up to the buyer if they want to disclose any findings during the pre-purchase exam to the seller. The buyer is in no way obligated to do so.

A pre-purchase exam is one of the most comprehensive exams your horse will ever have. It is not simply a "pass" or "fail" exam. It varies from vet to vet, but most will include similar components. We will start with a detailed history of what is known about the horse (from both the buyer and seller). We will ask what your goal is for the horse and what your experience level is with horses to ensure we find you a good fit. We will ask questions of the seller as well about the horse's wellness care, lameness history, medication history, farriery, housing, diet, etc. As the pre-purchase exam is paid for by the buyer, the seller does not have to disclose everything about the horse. In my experience, most sellers are willing to disclose basic wellness care information.



Prior to the exam, the vet will pull blood for a drug screen to test for medications that may alter the horse's performance or soundness. This is an assurance that the blood was sampled before the vet has done anything to the horse. We pull it to hold in case you buy the horse, and there is a sudden change in behavior or comfort. Some buyers choose to submit it right away while others may want it performed later on if such a behavior or comfort change does occur.

From there, we will start our comprehensive hands-on exam. We examine the cardiovascular, respiratory, gastrointestinal, integumentary (skin), lymphatic, and reproductive systems. If the horse is to be used as a breeding horse, the reproductive aspect of the exam will likely be more in depth than if there is no intent on breeding. We will do a full ophthalmic exam and a neurologic assessment. Often times, we then move onto the musculoskeletal aspect of the exam. This usually includes hands-on palpation of the horse followed by a gait evaluation. During the gait evaluation, flexions will be performed to see if there are any

lamenesses induced by flexing/stressing the joints. Some buyers may request radiographs (x-rays) be taken, while other times we base radiograph recommendations on the flexion tests. Additional advanced imaging (such as ultrasound) is usually not a part of a pre-purchase exam but can be requested.

A pre-purchase exam is not a health guarantee. It is a snapshot in time. Certain diagnostics can give us an idea of how the horse may progress with time, but it is not a guarantee of such. Regardless of if the horse is to be used as a competition horse or for recreational use, I highly recommend a pre-purchase exam to assess if that horse will be well-suited for you and your goals.



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Have You Considered a Fly Sheet?



Sherlock at Silvertooth Stables getting fitted for his first fly sheet.

Using a fly sheet is a smart way to give your horse a full-body physical barrier against biting pests. Plus, they're not only great for blocking bugs - they can be great for blocking sun, too!

How to Choose a Fly Sheet for Your Horse

The number of fly sheets available may make choosing the right one for your horse seem impossible. Here, we'll walk you through the key factors you should consider when choosing a fly sheet.

Amount of Coverage

One feature that differentiates one fly sheet from another is the amount of coverage it provides. When you're evaluating how much coverage a fly sheet will offer your horse, look for the following features:

• NECK COVER

Just like with your horse's turnout blankets, fly sheets are available with neck covers. Some neck covers are permanently attached to the fly sheet while others can be removed. If you want to have the option to leave your horse's neck uncovered or keep it covered, be sure to look for a fly sheet that has a detachable neck cover.

• BELLY WRAP

A belly wrap is a wide piece of fabric that, as the name suggests, wraps under your horse's belly. Along with providing extra coverage for your horse in that sensitive area, it helps keep the fly sheet securely on your horse.

• OVERSIZED OR FULL-WRAP TAIL FLAP

Some fly sheets offer an oversized tail flap for extra protection. Others have a full-wrap tail flap, which means that it is completely attached to the sheet. This prevents bugs from sneaking in through the gap that is created when the sides of the tail flap aren't attached to the sheet.

• LENGTH

There are fly sheets that are intentionally cut long to provide extra leg protection. If you'd like to provide coverage in this area, look for styles that have an extra "drop" at the front and hind legs. You'll typically find this feature in Rambo and Amigo fly sheets.

Material

Most fly sheets are made from lightweight, breathable fabric to prevent insects from landing on your horse without causing your horse to overheat. You'll most commonly find fly sheets made from polyester, but keep in mind that not all fabrics are created equal. If you have a horse that tends to be hard on his clothes, look for a fly sheet made from PVC coated polyester mesh, polyester/polypropylene, Textilene, or nylon mesh, because these fabrics are designed for durability. Some fly sheet fabrics are treated with insect repellent, so keep an eye out for

that option if you want to provide the ultimate protection. To find fly sheets for this option, check the descriptions of the fly sheets you're interested in at SmartPak.com and look for it in the benefits. One of the popular types of repellent used on fly sheets is called No-Fly Zone™, so keep an eye out for that in the name of the fly sheet.

UV Protection

The sun's rays aren't just harmful for you - they can negatively impact your horse, too! Too much exposure to the sun can cause your horse's coat color to fade, especially if you have a dark-colored horse. Many fly sheets offer UV protection to help prevent sun-bleaching, so your horse can show off his true colors no matter what time of year it is. Look for fly sheets that tout a percentage of "UV protection" as one of the benefits and keep in mind that the higher the percentage listed, the more blockage it provides.

Other Basic Features

Along with the three key features described above, there are other basic features that differentiate one fly sheet from another. If you're torn between a few different fly sheets that meet all of your requirements for coverage, material, and UV protection, consider using these basic features to break the tie:

• FRONT CLOSURES

Similar to other types of horse blankets, there are a variety of types of front closures to choose from. The most common types include:

- **Buckle-Front** - Just like a regular belt buckle, usually nylon straps with a metal buckle. This option offers a lot of adjustability.

- **Surcingle** - Also known as

"T-locks", surcingle closures on the front of the fly sheet will function just like the belly surcingles, with two metal pieces that interlock to keep the fly sheet closed.

- **Quick-Clip** - Any metal snap or clip fastener that you can open and close with one hand. This type of fastener is really "handy" to have if you're taking fly sheets on and off repeatedly.

- **V-Front** - Usually cut a little higher on the neck, V-Front fly sheets fasten lower on the chest, eliminating pressure when the horse has his head down.

Shoulder Gussets

These allow the sheet to offer a bit more "give" in the shoulder area, allowing for greater freedom of movement. If your horse tends to spend his time outside on the move, a fly sheet with shoulder gussets is a smart choice.

Surcingles

Surcingles are the straps that cross under your horse's belly, securing the fly sheet in place. More surcingles equals a more secure fit, so look for sheets that offer two or three surcingles if your horse is going to be wearing his fly sheet when he's turned out.

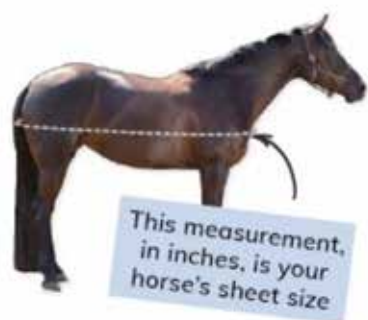
Leg Straps

Nylon or elastic leg straps help prevent shifting and keep the fly sheet secure on your horse.

Tail Cord

Some fly sheet styles offer a tail cord instead of leg straps. A tail cord clips from one side of the sheet to the other underneath your horse's tail. Like leg straps, it will help keep the

fly sheet in place. Some tail cords are covered in PVC or rubber, which



This measurement, in inches, is your horse's sheet size

fit in a fly sheet starts with knowing your horse's size. Fly sheets are sized like your horse's other sheets and blankets, so if you already know your horse's blanket size, you're already one step ahead of the game! If you're not sure what size blankets your horse wears, you'll want to start by measuring him.

To measure your horse, start at the center of your horse's chest and run a cloth tape measure along his side to the point of the buttocks where the "cheek" meets the tail. Include the widest part of his shoulder and keep the tape measure level and taut. The number of inches is your horse's true size (note: some brands run a little large or small, so we recommend checking out the hundreds and hundreds of product reviews left by

horse owners like you!).

How to Evaluate Your Horse's Fly Sheet Fit

Since your horse will be wearing his fly sheet in turnout, you want to be sure that he's comfortable in it while he's moving around. Test the fit of your horse's new fly sheet by watching him walk and graze in it, because these natural movements will highlight flaws in the fit. You'll want to pay special attention to the fit in three key areas:

• SHOULDERS:

The top of the front closure should line up with the point of your horse's shoulder, and the neckline should lie smoothly above his shoulder without pulling.

• WITHERS:

A fly sheet that's pulled tight across your horse's withers is a recipe for rubs. You should be able to slide one hand between the blanket and your horse's withers.

• LENGTH:

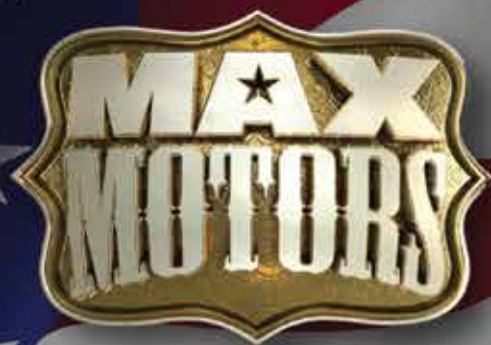
A fly sheet shouldn't look like a mini-skirt or a bed skirt. Ideally your horse's blanket should cover your horse's barrel entirely, ending just below his elbow and stifle, unless it's specifically designed to drop lower over the legs. If that's the case, the belly is the easiest place to confirm whether your fly sheet is the proper length.



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How to Measure Your Horse for a Fly Sheet

An ill-fitting fly sheet can restrict your horse's movement, cause rubs, shift, or even get tangled. Like with any other blanket, finding the perfect



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Salsbury Steak

1 1/2 lbs ground beef
 3/4 cup plain bread crumbs
 3/4 cup instant potato flakes
 2 Tbsp Lipton soup mix
 (ground fine)
 1/4 cup parmesan cheese
 2 Tbsp ketchup
 1 Tbsp dijon mustard
 salt and pepper

Mix everything together but don't over work or it will make the steaks tough. Form into steaks and fry in a little oil.

Sauce:

1 cup chopped button mushrooms
 1/2 cup chopped onions
 1/4 cup chopped bell pepper
 1 Tbsp dijon mustard

1 Tbsp tomato paste
 1 Tbsp ketchup
 ground pepper (watch the salt because of the beef base)

Mix together 1 Tbsp beef base, 2 Tbsp soup base, 1 to 2 Tbsp corn starch and enough water for the sauce (1 to 2 cups).

Remove the steaks from the pan and add the onions, mushrooms and peppers.

Sauté until soft then add the rest of the ingredients. Adjust the liquid and corn starch to the right thickness, put the steaks back in the gravy for a bit to warm up and serve with mashed taters!



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Horse Back Pain

By Better Horses

Nothing frustrates horse owners and veterinarians like back pain in horses. Because of the wide variety of causes, as well as the wide variety of clinical signs and therapeutic options, back soreness in horses can be a diagnostic challenge and a treatment dilemma. Fortunately there are a few veterinarians who seem to be able to successfully navigate these waters so let's launch into a better understanding of horse back pain from them.



Professional Trainer Matt Jobe, C Bar J Ranch, inspecting horse soundness.

What causes it?

The majority of back problems are bony in nature but are always combined with soft tissue damage. While ligament or muscle soreness may be the primary culprit in some cases, causes of the more common bone pain include "kissing spines," arthritis of the articular facets between vertebrae, spondylosis (ossification, or bone formation, of vertebral joints), and fracture of bony structures in the spine.

Some veterinarians say that back pain due to hock lameness, poor saddle fit, and behavioral issues are all myths. Others insist that certain disciplines, rider imbalance, ill-fitting tack, poor conformation, unsatisfactory shoeing, lack of

conditioning and even poorly fitting blankets can all lead to soreness in the back, proving just how challenging diagnosis and treatment can be.

What does it look like?

The following are signs of back pain in horses:

- Objecting to being saddled
- Being slow to warm up
- Becoming difficult to shoe
- Developing a bad attitude
- Resisting work
- Displaying abnormal tail swishing
- Initiating uncharacteristic behavior (such as bolting or running away)

Specific signs pointing to "kissing spines" (aka overriding dorsal spinous processes) are back stiffness, reduced jumping ability, resistance to work, change of temperament, and resentment of grooming or picking up the hind feet.

"Kissing spines" occurs most often in young thoroughbreds or thoroughbred-crosses with short backs used primarily for jumping. Show jumpers appear to be the most commonly affected, although eventers and hunters suffer from this condition as well.

How is it diagnosed?

Identifying a change in performance or personality as back pain and then pinpointing the primary cause of this back pain can be a veterinary diagnostic challenge. Step one is obtaining a detailed history from the owner and/or rider including when a problem was first noticed, exactly what the problem is, and what has already been done to try and

resolve the problem. Step two is a comprehensive physical examination including visual inspection, palpation, and assessment of the horse's flexibility and ranges of motion. Next, the veterinarian will perform a lameness examination in motion. That is, he or she will evaluate the horse's soundness and way of going while being walked and jogged in hand, being lunged, and being ridden. Depending on the results of this initial work-up, the veterinarian may recommend diagnostic imaging such as X-rays, ultrasound, bone scan (nuclear scintigraphy), and/or thermography.

What are some of the treatment choices?

According to Dr. Kent Allen, Official Veterinary Coordinator of the Olympic Games and the World Equestrian Games, the ideal treatment is one that addresses both bone and soft tissue, lasts four to six months, and is relatively inexpensive. Examples of various treatments include:

- Injecting corticosteroids into painful joints
- NSAIDs to decrease inflammation
- Muscle relaxants
- Mesotherapy (a pain-dampening technique of injections that stimulate the mesoderm, the middle layer of the skin)
- Chiropractics, acupuncture, and therapeutic ultrasound
- Ensuring proper saddle fit
- Estrone sulfate to help improve muscle tone
- Extracorporeal shock wave therapy (ESWT)
- Time off from performance in the case of trauma

Unfortunately, any time there are this many treatment methods available it means that nothing works consistently. The key thing to remember is that when treating a back injury, owners are not only dealing with inflammation but also pain. Therefore treatment must break the pain/spasm cycle and motion must be restored. Rest alone does the horse no favors.

Successful therapy involves rehabilitation of the back and re-evaluation within four to six weeks then again within three to four months. Research has shown that performing baited stretches (i.e. carrot stretches) regularly over a three-month period can activate and strengthen the muscles that support and stabilize the horse's back. These dynamic mobilization exercises can be used to restore musculoskeletal function following injury, return the horse to maximal performance, and reduce the risk of further injury in the future.

The good news is that in the hands of qualified sports medicine practitioners, the majority of horses with back pain returned to their previous level of exercise when diagnosed properly and treated aggressively.



Handling Horse Show Nerves

By Better Horses



Susie Arbo at the Pinto World Championship Show Tulsa, Oklahoma

A big part of the horse show experience are the nerves, anxiety, and fears that many riders have on competition day. Sometimes, those anxious feelings kick in the night before or hit you first thing in the morning while braiding.

If you ask your fellow riders if they experience show day anxiety, you will get a wide range of answers. Even if everyone seems calm and collected, they may hide their anxiety just under the surface. Having this feeling before a show is entirely normal. The good news is that the more often you compete, the better you will learn to handle horse show nerves.

Seven Tips to Reduce Horse Show Nerves

When you are at a horse show, the entire focus is on the competition. Whether planning for your next class, grooming your horse, cleaning tack, or watching others compete, you are entirely immersed in the show environment. If you get nervous at horse shows, this complete immersion can make it even harder to relax. Here are some tips to help you stay

calm and collected at your next horse show.

1. Breathe and Reflect

If you are feeling tense right before you enter your class, give yourself a little pep talk, or have a trusted trainer or friend give one to you. Recap your training and plan for the class, and take plenty of deep breaths before entering the ring.

At the end of the class, breathe and reflect on the performance. This is an excellent way to develop as a rider, calm nerves before another class, and learn from the highs and lows. Don't forget to show yourself a little appreciation for all your hard work!

2. Don't Forget to Eat and Hydrate

It seems obvious, but don't starve yourself when expecting so much from your body. With a crammed schedule, it's surprising how many people skip breakfast and lunch during horse shows. Before you know it, it's 3:00 PM, and you feel queasy and lightheaded. Instead, pack food or have a plan for meals. On the same note, stay hydrated, and keep lots of water on hand. Remember, your body needs fuel to perform.

3. Have a Routine

Create a horse show routine, so you know exactly where you need to be when, as well as where everything is that you could possibly need. Part of this routine may be packing the trailer before the show or doing a deep cleaning on your horse. You may want to find a quiet spot like the tack stall or your car to sit, close your eyes, and visualize how you want your ride

to go. It could also include jamming to your favorite tunes while running through the class schedule. It's okay to have fun with it, loosen up, and let go of the nerves!



4. Focus on the Ride

Horse shows have enough pressure and stress. Give yourself a break! Remember, it's not always about winning or losing, how fast you were, or how many downed rails. What's important is how your horse felt and whether you made progress as a team.

Focus on the ride's positive parts. Your horse got all the correct leads, nailed his extended trot, or stayed on the rail. These are all accomplishments. If you remain in the right mindset, your horse will feel your positive attitude, and you'll feel better about the experience overall.

5. Challenge Yourself

We've all heard the saying, "If it were easy, everybody would do it." As riders, we've all been through plenty of difficult situations. Challenging yourself is the best, fastest, and most rewarding way to improve. Remember, you are trying to improve your skills and overcome nerves, and it is ok to fail sometimes as long as you can learn something.

6. Be Prepared and Be Flexible

Many people find managing horse show nerves starts with your training at home. Take some lessons to improve your skills in advance of the show. Practice the test, course, or movements repeatedly until you can do them with distractions. Then, when in the ring with all the busy show day sounds and distractions, you will be more confident in your abilities. Life with horses can be as unpredictable as rewarding. Don't be upset if everything doesn't go according to plan — what seems like a disaster might be an opportunity.

7. Get Support

The best cure for horse show nerves is having an incredible group of barn friends, trainers, and horses who make showing enjoyable and can support each other. Most riders (from beginner walk-trot to Olympic level) have experienced show day nerves at one point in their lives. If you need help handling your nerves, don't be afraid to reach out and ask your trainer or fellow riders.



Competing should be a fun experience. Shows should be an open place for riders to develop their skills with their horses and learn and grow. If that is not your takeaway, try something new on show day and see if it changes the game.

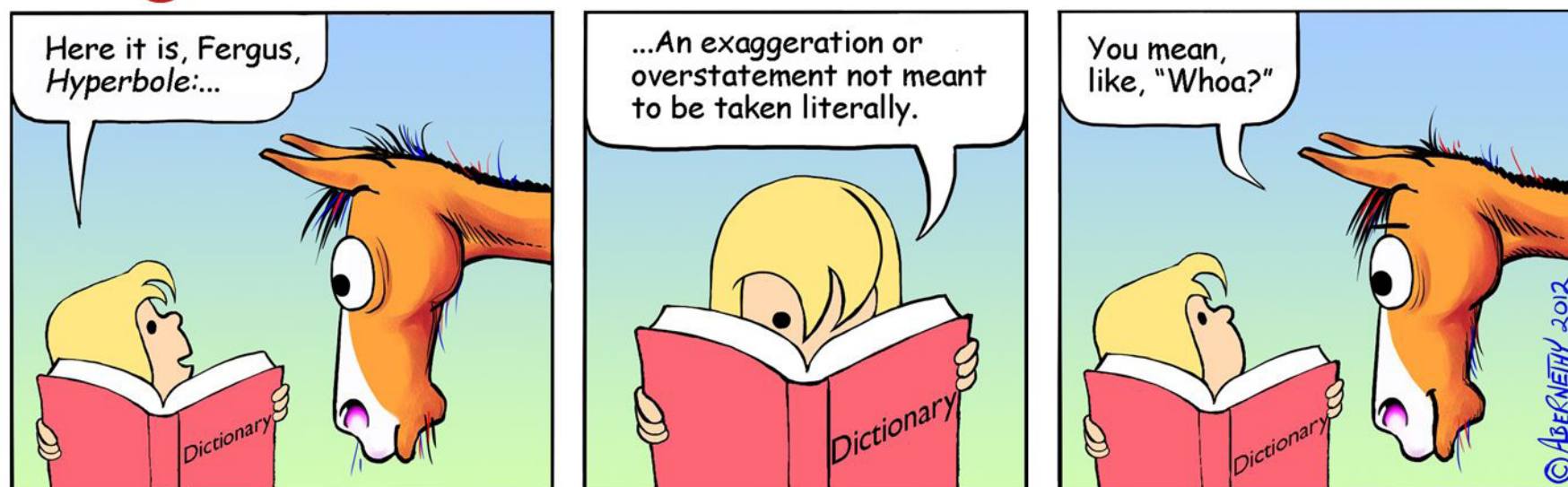


Welcome Fergus to the Better Horses Family!

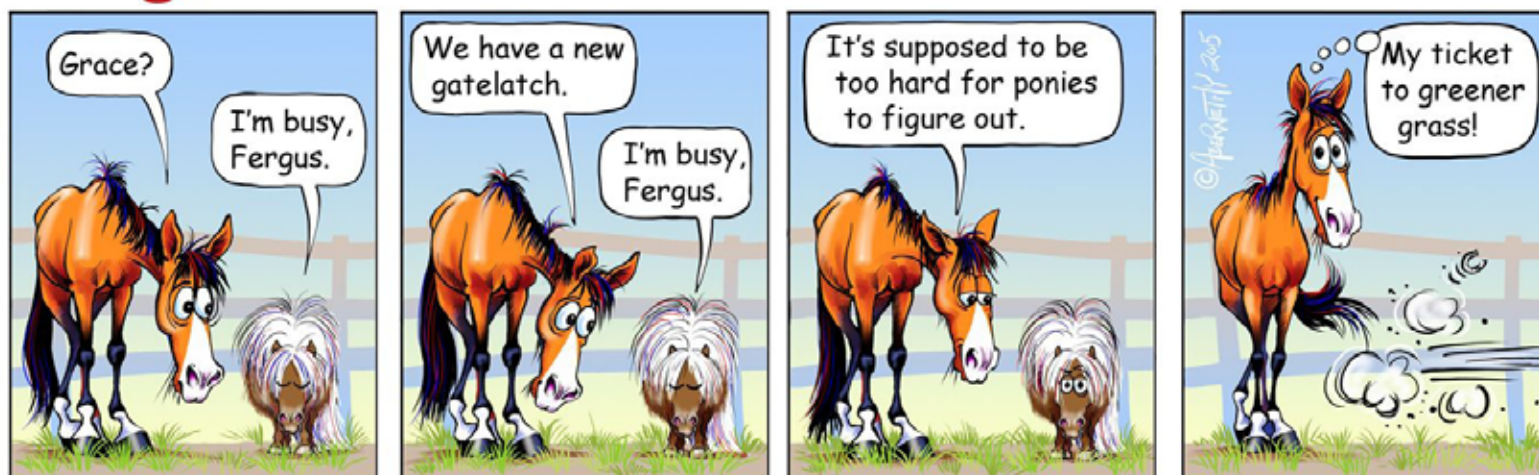
Fergus (Equus hilarious) BY JEAN ABERNETHY



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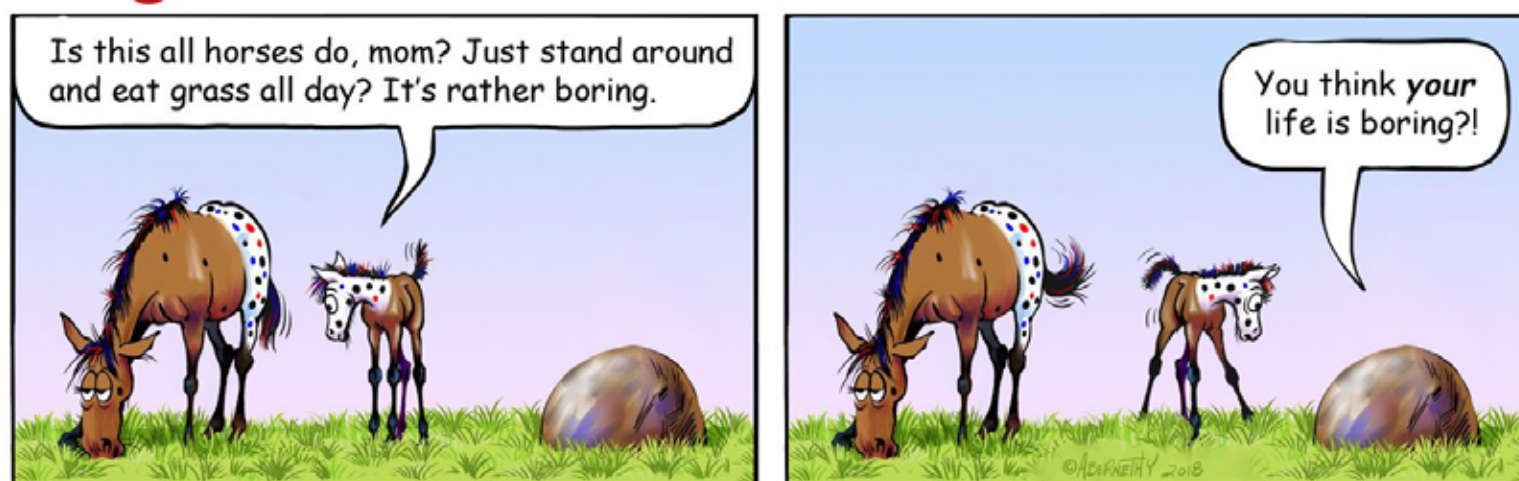
Fergus (Equus hilarious) BY JEAN ABERNETHY



Fergus (Equus hilarious) BY JEAN ABERNETHY



Fergus (Equus hilarious) BY JEAN ABERNETHY



A photograph of two horses running in a grassy field. The horse on the left is dark brown, and the horse on the right is a lighter brown. They are both in motion, running towards the right. In the background, there is a white fence and some trees.

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A Cowboy's Faith

By Frank J. Buchman

Get On To Ride

"Don't put off until tomorrow what can be done today."

Many people often postpone tasks until the following day. Procrastination is a common fault when a job can be readily completed at the present time. If something can be accomplished, it is always best to finish the project now instead of waiting until later.

Persistence is required for whatever the endeavor. Regardless of how easy it seems to postpone a job, there is always a feeling of satisfaction when it has been finished.

Getting on a colt for the first time is typically a difficult decision. Yet to ride a horse, it first must be mounted. There are different philosophies on how that is to be accomplished. Typically, it can be done first bareback putting the bodyweight across the horse's back. Once the horse becomes accustomed to the weight, the entire body can be placed across the back. Generally, the horse will soon become relaxed with the extra weight.

After becoming accustomed to the body weight, it is best to expose the horse to the saddle blanket. It can be rubbed over the back and moved from side to side.

A saddle can be slowly and gently placed on the blanket and moved

around. When the weight becomes familiar to the horse, the saddle girth can be snugged slightly under the horse's stomach. Pressure should be increased slowly so the saddle doesn't readily shift if the horse moves. The saddled horse can be permitted to stand for an extended time to become more familiar to the feeling.

When the horse is accustomed to the extra saddle movement, it is time to step up into the saddle. The best way is to get right on the horse and then get immediately off. Before long, the horse becomes used to the body weight and will stand contently.

The saddled horse can then be walked in a circle both directions before being encouraged to trot. Working slow pace, the horse can be asked to increase speed moving into a relaxed cantor.

When it's time for the first ride, it's best done in a small round pen. The horse is mounted at a standstill and then moved in a circle one short step. Moving slow and calm, the horse will soon move collected around the pen.

Reminded of Proverbs 25:15:
"Patient persistence pierces through indifference."



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BETTER CATTLE

White Gold

Task force working to capture value for commercial producers of Charolais-influenced cattle.

By Sharla Ishmael

There aren't too many scenes that'll make a commercial cattle producer – and their banker – prouder than looking at a growthy, stout, smoky calf standing almost as tall as his black or baldie mama. The picture can change depending on the location of the ranch – he might be looking at the same scale-busting calf next to a good tiger-striped mama down south.

Either way, producers have long known that capitalizing on the magic of heterosis compounded with the use of a terminal-breed sire is a profitable way to max out the scales at weaning, as yearlings or fat cattle. With the nation's January 1 beef cow inventory hitting one of the lowest numbers seen in recent history due to widespread drought, it is more important than ever for the commercial rancher to take advantage of a bullish market predicted for calves and feeders over the next few years.

With a much smaller herd and the need to go slow with restocking as the land recovers from drought – hopefully before the next one hits – every pound will count. Unfortunately, the market is set up today based on premiums for black-hided cattle and given that the cattle cycle has been in the heavy-supply stage, where every segment after the ranch has enjoyed the ability to be choosy, it has meant good cattle of all colors don't always get sold for the value they bring to the industry at every stage.

It's a problem Charolais seedstock producers are not willing to deal

with any longer. So much so that the American-International Charolais Association has created a task force of progressive breeders and outside consultants to explore every possible opportunity to make sure their commercial bull buyers get additional or new market access for their calves.

"Numerous closeout sheets from Charolais-influenced cattle harvested at Tyson plants in the past two years document these cattle produce carcasses that compete extremely well on the rail," says AICA Executive Vice President Clint Rusk. "It is imperative this carcass value be reflected in the live market."

Charolais breeders are not alone in their quest to fix the problem.

"Our task force is already working with another task force led by Tom Brink, chief executive officer of the Red Angus Association of America, to explore a change in the way feeder cattle are marketed," Rusk explains. "Our Charolais breeders agree with those who say feeder cattle should be marketed on their genetic merit rather than the color of their hide."

Last year, Brink released an important white paper with results of a survey of feedlot managers that shows they also see a great need for change in the feeder cattle market. When asked if black-hided feeder cattle are superior to non-black cattle of equal weight, sex and health history, 75% disagreed with that statement.

In fact, 92% of the survey participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement: "For the beef industry to continue improving its overall cattle quality and value, hide color should be replaced with more objective genetic criteria as a key price-determining factor(s) in the U.S. feeder cattle market."

What will it take to make those changes so smoky or cream-colored calves can get premiums for their performance? For the Charolais task force, all options are on the table, from feeder cattle marketing programs, better utilization of existing grids for Charolais-influenced cattle, data gathering from private sources to solidify how these cattle excel in terms of feed efficiency, average daily gain and overall performance at the feedlot and packer in terms of both red meat yield and quality grade on the rail.

They are working on getting Charolais-influenced cattle into the latest sustainability research projects to study their efficiency advantages relative to other breeds. If carbon capture and greenhouse emissions play a role in the future of beef, breeders on the task force believe the breed's natural efficiency and performance will be a competitive advantage in that arena.

The task force has met with major packing company executives to determine how Charolais-influenced cattle are perceived on their end and what the association can do to help increase demand for the cattle at the retail level. They've also initiated discussions on private branding with meat marketing experts.

Basically, these breeders are reaching out to every segment of the industry to lay groundwork leading to a premium structure for Charolais-



influenced cattle at the commercial level. Charolais-influenced cattle are already well-liked in the industry. Ranchers appreciate the cattle for their performance, feeders love them for their efficiency and packers value their cutability, ability to grade Choice or better, as well as putting more product in the box. The task for these seedstock folks is to find ways to capture the real-world value of Charolais-influenced calves.

Marcine Moldenhauer is one of the industry experts AICA has tapped to advise the task force. She has experience both as a breeder of Charolais, Red Angus and Maine-Anjou, 25 years in cattle procurement as a cattle buyer, strategic supply manager and leading the premium sales and marketing team for a major packer. For the last 15 years as owner of Meatlink Management, LLC, her livestock and meat business consulting firm, she has worked with multiple companies in multiple countries, breed associations, chefs and specialty fed cattle beef programs on the challenges and how to approach creating and supplying a branded beef program.

"Packers know the value of Charolais-cross cattle, they do cutting tests, they track performance, they know," she explains. "They know Charolais-cross are going to yield from live to carcass and from carcass to the box; the packers know these cattle have very favorable quality grades with low yield grades. They know these cattle are a good value. However, because over the last 10 years or so there have been plant closings and increased supply, the packers have simply not had to pay more for these types of cattle."

For years, USDA has only recognized "Angus" as 51% black hided, those cattle that are percentage Angus (red or black), have not been accepted into "Angus" brands, such as black-nosed Charolais or the blonde-hided cattle. She believes in order to compete with that, it's necessary to cultivate either a foodservice, retail or a small restaurant partner – better yet one of each – that understands the value and sees an opportunity for them.

"This is why Cargill, for one, created their Sterling Silver brand over 25 years ago," she adds. "The other challenge is to create multi-tiered brands where Charolais-cross cattle that are USDA Select or higher all have a home in a branded beef program. You want multiple programs for the Charolais-influenced cattle to go into. The reality is the packer is not going to find your customer for you, that will be the breed's job."

One of the breeders on the task force is Brett DeBruycker of Montana, who says the Charolais association is up for the challenge.

"We're being very aggressive in fleshing out the different opportunities," he says. "I think the association is refocusing on what is most important to our business, and that is the commercial cattle producer. I'll admit we fell behind in promoting what our breed can do."

"For instance, I have documentation that pink-nosed, straightbred Charolais cattle qualified for the following premiums in the summer of 2022. Steers received \$80/head and heifers received \$85/head on the U.S. Premium Beef grid. These cattle added value to the

industry by grading and yielding well on the rail," he adds.

"You've got to hand it to Angus, they were out helping packers sell meat, spending money as an association talking to retailers while we, as a breed, were focusing on breed improvement and adding value to our customers and the industry through increased performance, efficiency and carcass quality," DeBruycker adds. "Hindsight being 20/20, we should have been helping packers sell Charolais beef. One of the things I have learned on this task force is how vitally important it is for our breed to talk to consumers."

A few years ago, he took a phone call from a gentleman from France who recently moved to Washington state. The man was very excited to have found DeBruycker Charolais online because he had been looking for Charolais beef since moving



to the U.S. The man told him in France, Charolais is considered a delicacy and everybody there wants to eat it. DeBruycker says more U.S. consumers would share that

fondness for beef from the white breed if they got a chance to taste it and know where it came from.

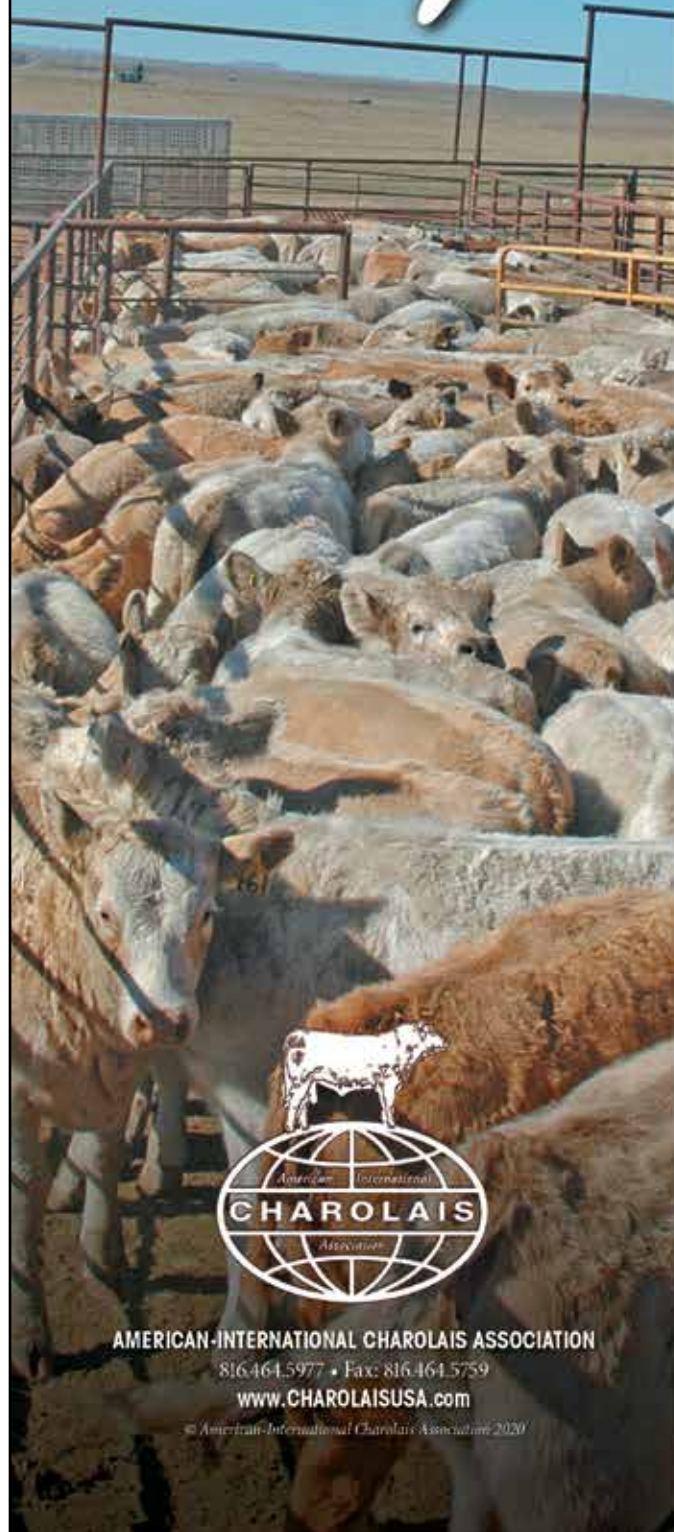
Mark Nelson is also advising the Charolais task force, and he too has seen the other side of the business having ran the Angus America program for Cargill for seven years. He says part of what the breed needs to keep its eyes on is being ready for the future, when the cattle cycle turns again and cattle numbers are on the rise.

"I think in the next five years, ranchers will benefit from high prices due to short supplies," he says. "But we all know those high prices won't last. So, the breed needs to have something up and running on all cylinders by then so folks with Charolais-cross calves will be able to use them when they really need them. There is so much potential with this breed. Charolais is the kingpin of what they do. The cattle have really been begging for their breeders to do something like this because the cattle merit it."

So, from a commercial perspective what does this mean for their Charolais-influenced calves being born now? It means those white bulls in the pasture will bring home gold for you now by putting extra pounds on the scale when every pound is likely to be worth much more than it has been when cattle numbers were high. And, if the Charolais task force does the job it hopes to accomplish, you'll have not just more pounds to sell in the future but also more premiums and demand for those high-performing calves. Stay tuned.



Why Not



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¹ Esther Dorice McCabe, 2018, Kansas State University,

Dept. of Animal Sciences and Industry, College of Agriculture

"Breed trends and effect of breed on sale price of lots of beef calves marketed via video auction"

Stress Transfer

By Ashley Purdin | Horse Trainer
www.pioneerhorsemanship.com

One of the marks of a good horseman is the ability to be self-aware enough to know when a horse's behavior/excitement etc... is coming from the horse, the environment or coming from the energy you are projecting. It is so much easier to blame the horse for the issues or inconsistencies in behavior or being amped up and so much harder to take an introspective approach to make sure you aren't contributing to or causing the problem.



I had a lesson with a student this week that is going through a lot in her personal life right now. PLUS she had a crazy day leading up to the lesson. I rode the horse before she did and I had a fantastic ride. As soon as she got on the horse he just wanted to jig and lope and go fast. He had no ability to settle hardly at all with her on his back. I was so proud of her for recognizing that she had an "electric" stress energy that she was projecting! She was practicing a lot of emotional control and determination to even have her lesson this week. As another human sharing the interaction for an hour with her I only knew she was stressed by what she chose to

share with me about what was going on. Which, by the way, as a trainer, I super appreciate these confidential conversations that provide me with some context. If I didn't have the context, and she didn't have the self-awareness, it would have been hard for me to figure out what was going on between her and her horse that day. To my eye, her tension and stress energy was basically invisible. But that horse knew right away something was wrong and immediately felt like he needed to move his feet and get activated into flight mode himself, mirroring her state.

When we go through traumatic or stressful seasons our nervous systems become dis-regulated. This means that we spend more time in fight, flight or freeze mode than we do in safe/social mode. We may be losing sleep, we may not be eating well or taking care of ourselves, we may feel exhausted, depleted, emotional, numb, untethered, afraid or many other states that signal to our horses that we are not ok. Our horse's nervous systems, as herd animals, are highly tuned to stress signals from animals in their immediate environment, us included. Plus, we amplify this stress communication by climbing on their backs in a dis-regulated state whereby we could accidentally cause all kinds of strange stress behaviors in our horse. It is up to us to have enough self-awareness to know when we don't have the ability that day to give our horse what they need. And we also have to be gracious enough and respectful enough of our horses to acknowledge when they can't give us what we needed emotionally that day either.

On days like this maybe hand grazing your horse, or doing some grooming and just enjoying the

company of each other would be the best thing you could do for both of you. Are you willing to set your goals to the side or be creative about reaching them in order to give yourself some time and space to work though some of the tough times that life is throwing at you? You deserve to cut yourself some slack and allow yourself the extra time and space to heal, recover and rest. You are allowed to have a bad day with lower expectations on yourself. Take all the

time you need to breathe, survive and get through it. Your riding goals will still be there for you when you get to feeling better.



Zucchini Relish

10 cups of ground zucchini
4 cups onions ground
2 Peppers , 1 green and 1 red, ground
Grind these three and mix together with 3 teaspoons of salt and let stand overnight.
Drain and rinse in cold water
Drain again.
Add:
2 1/2 Cups Apple Cider Vinegar
4 1/4 Cups Sugar
1 teaspoon celery seed
1 teaspoon pepper
2 teaspoons nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon turmeric
2 teaspoon cornstarch
1 teaspoon mustard seed

Heat to a boiling point.
Put in sterilized jars and lids.
Process in boiling water for 10 minutes for pints.
Takes about 5 minutes

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A RECENT TRIP

By Del Shields – Best Of America By Horseback Television Show

Traveling America's highways and back roads is what we love to do, to get to the places where we really want to be. Those places that few others seldom see or experience, and we get to do it on horseback.

As we make preparations to do so, we try to cross off everything on our list that we could possibly need, to keep things from going wrong. On a recent trip we set out on, it seemed that our check list was being tested. We were traveling in a group with others, which made it better. However, it also added to the number of things on the check-list that were being tested on this trip. Traveling with other trucks and trailers is a good thing in my estimation, but it can also mean that your travel and arrival time to your destination may be slowed down.

Among our group, we had a flat tire that needed to be changed and repaired, which held up others who were traveling with us. Estimating fuel stops a little short, caused one truck to have to stop along the road, to pour fuel from a container one of the other travelers was hauling as a back-up. When leaving Cheyenne, WY, to head on up to Montana, one from our group blew the rear end in his truck, leaving him stranded along the highway. After getting his truck and trailer towed to a local shop and horse hotel, we left out again. Not too far north of Cheyenne, we crossed a bridge on Hwy 25 which had a rough approach. The jar of the bump caused one of our cabin windows in our LQ trailer to shatter out on the road. After some superman duct tape and a hefty, hefty trash bag, just like Willie sings about,

we were on the road again. We arrived at our destination later that day, and upon arriving and refocusing on what the weekend held for us, we mostly forgot about the challenges we had encountered.

I guess my point is this. Traveling with horses isn't always carefree and problem free. It can sometimes be costly and have inconveniences. But if you choose to have experiences with your horse that give you enjoyment and create memories, count the cost and see if you are willing to endure the occasional challenges. Make sure you take advantage of all the mostly reasonable travel insurances and road side helps. We cannot prevent some things from happening, but we can make sure it's a whole lot better when we do our homework and prepare to the best of our ability. The journey is part of the memory making process. Do what's best for you and your situation, but don't limit yourself because of the fear of what might go wrong. Life is ours to live. If you have horses and love to ride, the trails are endless. Hopefully, we'll see you there.



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Building a Foundation in a Young and/or Green Horse

By Kerry Kuhn

What does the foundation in a horse mean to you? Is it important enough to you to not cut corners and give the horse the time it needs to learn what you're trying to teach?

If there is one thing that's been reiterated to me working with horses, time and time again, it's this...

The foundation we give a horse in the beginning will influence them the rest of their life.

I want to share with you some thoughts and ideas geared toward helping to build a willing, respectful, and patient frame of mind in a horse. I'm going to share them in an outline format. I hope this outline will help create a desire in people to value what a horse goes through when they are getting started. You can use this outline in your own training program to help you find the best approach to communicate with your horses.

In the beginning you might not have access to the mind, so you use the body to gain access to the mind. As you get more access to the mind, you use the mind to access more of the body. The goal is to establish a connection between the two.

- The best way to access the mind and body of the horse is to put them to work/expel energy. Again, make sure your goal in that work is to connect the mind and body of the horse. If you don't show interest in the mind (thoughts) of the horse, you'll never have all of the horse.

- Whenever introducing something new to your horse (rope, flag, tarp,

chaps, etc.), always start friendly with them.

- Don't introduce new objects or approach issues with a full gas tank. Fresh horses tend to be way more reactive. Exhausted horses tend to be dead or unresponsive. Try to find that happy medium with the horse you are working with. And that might be different for each one.

- Flag work specifically:
 - Start high and behind the drive line working your way toward the tail. This will encourage forward motion if the horse is reactive.
 - From the tail, work the hind legs, again allowing forward motion if necessary.
 - From hind legs you can work under the belly and behind the front legs.
 - From the withers you can work up the neck to the head.
 - Last spot is under the neck/chin, in front of the front legs. Take as much time as you need to get here so you don't get the horse started striking at the flag, it's hard to stop.

- Two things that will make it much easier to get a horse moving out once you start riding them is a smooch and using rhythm on the accelerator (their hip). Be cognitive of both of these throughout your entire groundwork approach. Work to build them from the beginning so when the horse is ready to ride, you'll have these working effectively.

- Moving away from a horse with a scary object/motion can help bring

out the horse's curiosity. Their curiosity is powerful and can help them overcome their fear.

- A horse has no need for me inside their comfort zone. Asking them to step outside that comfort zone gives them a need to look to you. Your goal is to help them find their way back to that place of peace. That process is going from calm to bothered and then from bothered back to calm. Horses are naturally good at going from calm to bothered. They need practice at going from bothered back to calm. Those opportunities give you a chance to show them that you can help them find their way back. Don't leave them hanging by letting your impatience or emotions get in the way!

- Use a soft rope or lunge line around the barrel (from the elbow to the flank) allowing the horse to move forward while they are feeling the rope tighten up. Always bring the ring up from under the belly so gravity will help it release quickly when you put some slack in the rope. Drag that rope over their hip and hold above their hocks and let them get comfortable with that before letting them step out of it. Make sure you hold the rope just behind the ring so if they panic and move quickly, you can hold the rope safely and slide them some slack if necessary.

- Use that same soft rope/lunge line on all four feet, teaching the horse to give to pressure and not just yank their foot away from you. Each leg

will give you another opportunity to teach the horse to relax their mind and soften to you. It's another example of going from bothered to calm!

- The elbow of a horse can be very sensitive. A rider often bumps it while mounting and dismounting. Raise your leg and rub their elbow with your knee until they are comfortable with it.

- When introducing the saddle pad, rub them everywhere with it. Be diligent with it until you can appear careless.

- When introducing the saddle, swing it on their back multiple times from each side, making sure they get comfortable with the motion. Remove all cinches and breast collar if necessary to make it lighter for this process.

- When you're ready to cinch your saddle down, think of every possible scenario so you can potentially avoid any traumatic experiences during the saddling process. A saddle on the ground is much better than a saddle hanging under their belly.

- When you turn the horse loose with the saddle, if they start bucking, just encourage them to speed up. Show them how to find forward. That forward will be crucial when you climb on.

- Get your horse very comfortable with swinging the lead rope back and forth over their head, from both

sides. This will help them learn to relax with ropes moving past their eyes.

- When the horse is more comfortable with that process, flip the lead rope over their butt and teach them how to turn away from you. This will help them get comfortable with ropes behind their butt around their legs and also give them a chance to switch eyes as they make that turn. Switching eyes is a must! **PRACTICE THIS!**

- Driving or lunging with two lines is a great way to help a horse switch eyes. It's also a great way to teach them to follow a feel with their nose, learn to stop and back up, and even roll up in the bridle a bit while moving forward. They also get to experience you behind them some as they move forward and at times can't see you. This is a great time to continue to build your smooch.

- Introducing a lariat rope from the ground is the best place to start.

Rub them with it first coiled up. Bounce the coils on them all over them until non-reactive. Then stand around and near them swinging a loop until they aren't bothered with the sound and movement. This will make taking it with you in the saddle much easier. If need be, walk away from them while you are swinging your loop until they calm down.

- When mounting, tip the horse's nose towards you before climbing on. Horse **MUST** give their face to you before you put your foot in the stirrup.

- Always mount every horse from both sides multiple times. As many times as it takes to get them comfortable with the process. This helps get a horse balanced on each side, and a balanced horse can relax easier. Every time you step down, ask the horse to move its feet to a different spot, preferably with forward motion. This will make it easier to get forward when you stay in the saddle and ask the horse to

move out.

- Rubbing on a horse to tell them good job is very important, it draws them to you.

- At times, leave them alone without rubbing on them. It draws them to the release and also gives them time to digest their thoughts without you distracting that process. As a general rule, if they are scared of you, rub on them. If they are not scared of you, you can just leave them alone. You want a horse drawn to you and drawn towards the release. You can rub on one if you want, but you don't always have/need to. Play around with this idea and let the horse guide you.

- Just because a horse will let you on doesn't mean he/she is ready. Look for signs of tension and don't ignore them. A horse that isn't relaxed has a hard time thinking, they tend to just react. Reactive horses are dangerous. They don't have to be perfect, but you at least

need the ball rolling in my direction.

- There is never a guarantee when starting horses. But there are many things you can do to lessen the chances of getting hurt. Time invested getting them ready is your greatest asset. Don't let a human pressure you to climb on a horse that shows many signs of tension. It's your job to see those signs and respect them!!

- Build a frame of mind in the horse so you don't feel like you have to constantly babysit or try and talk them out of being reactive.

Our goal is to educate and motivate others in an inspiring way that can help them achieve their dreams. To find out more about Kerry Kuhn Horsemanship and our new Empower Team, go to www.KerryKuhn.com for more information.



Walton Wisdom Tip

Buying a “well-trained horse”, to improve your riding, makes it much easier to learn how to ride but always remember if you don't learn the correct cues and how to use those cues correctly the horse will loose the status of being a “well-trained horse”.

Bill Walton
816-223-3469



Cowboy Church with Steve Stafford



Hey folks, good to see you once again. I sure look forward to our times together, I miss seeing you, I miss visiting with you. Well today I'm experiencing something that I've not seen much of for the past couple of years. You see, there's an aroma in the air that I vaguely remember, there's a sound on my

roof that sounds a little familiar, oh I remember now, it's RAIN! Halleluiah - It's raining! Oh my the land is so dry, so thirsty, as we've been in a drought for a couple of years. Creeks are dry, ponds are mud, grass is scarce, the land is crying out to be refreshed.

You know what, we are kind of the same really, there are times when our soul is dry and thirsty, and we need the refreshing of the Spirit of God.

The Bible says in Psalm 63:1 "O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you, my soul thirsts for you, and my body longs for you. In a dry

and weary land where there is no water."

You know folks, we need to come to the Lord when we are dry and thirsty, Jesus said more than once that He is the "Living Water". In fact, Jesus said this, "Everyone that drinks water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that I give, will never thirst again", John 4:13-14. You see, just as we need physical water for these bodies to live, we need the Spiritual Water that is Jesus, otherwise our spiritual bodies will wither up and die. When we accept Jesus into our heart, He refreshes us, He fills us, He Saves us, and with Him we will live forever. The only thing I have to say is, "Fill me up Lord God, fill me up with all that you are".

Friends, I pray that you know Jesus as your Lord and your Savior, if not just ask Him to come into your heart, and the good news is that He will.

Hope to see you down the trail,
Pastor Steve.

*Pastor Steve Stafford
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Summer Tips for Selling a Horse Property

By Maggie Stonecipher

The rising interest rates have cooled the market, but it is still hot this summer! The cooling of the market has also stabilized prices and in some cases brought them down! So while interest rates may have brought down the price range you search, properties may now also be in your price range that would not have been last year. Sellers must be even more prepared in order to get top dollar! I continue to be surprised at the lack of staging and poor marketing of some properties. It is tough and stressful to have your property for sale but if you want to get top dollar, these few tips may go a long way.

Be Ready for the Showing

Showing a horse property almost always requires an appointment which means the seller gets to approve the appointment and has notice. Don't accept an appointment if it does not give you enough time to prepare. No is a complete sentence and you do not have to take appointments on short notice if it puts you at a disadvantage – mentally or physically!

Clean and Neat

It is so uncomfortable to tour a horse property when it is dusty, dirty and full of cobwebs. You don't want your buyer walking out of your barn feeling like a dirty mess. Take some time to knock down the cobwebs, dust off the walls and sweep the floor. If you have boarders, ask your boarders to straighten up their areas and do some decluttering.

Ventilation – Go the extra mile not only for your horses but for your prospective buyers. Add extra fans around the barn so that it does not feel stifling in the heat. Set up clean fans in your stalls, tack room, grain room, aisles and other common area. The circulation goes a long way to cooling your barn and making it more inviting. Try not to accept appointments in the heat of the day.

Clean Stalls and Arenas

If a buyer is looking at your horse property, they most likely have horses and want to envision where their Dobbin will live. The normal smells in a barn are heightened with hot weather, and not in a good way. Take the time to clean your stalls, paddocks and arenas prior to the appointment. Add fresh shavings to your stalls. Try to schedule appointments around your mucking schedule to minimize your stress.

Manure Management

Dispose of any manure mounds before showings. Dump muck buckets and the manure spreader. In the heat, these become quite smelly and attract flies.

Organize Your Barn

Everything should have a home! Organize rakes, shovels, manure picks, grain/hay areas, hoses and most importantly, tack rooms. Declutter what you don't absolutely need by purging or putting in storage. Make your barn organized and easy to tour!

Take out the Trash

Empty all trash cans prior to showings and pick up any odds and ends.

You only get one opportunity to make that first impression so make yours by putting your best foot forward and showing off your horse property!



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