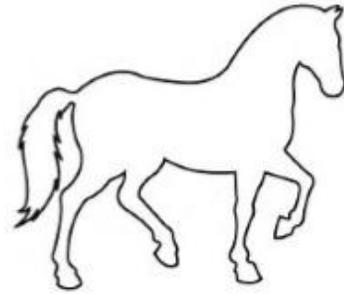


## *Helpful Tips for Horse Owners*



### *Horseshoes in the Snow?*

*If your horse is still wearing horse shoes, make sure you check their feet and pick out the "snow balls." Walking on them can damage their feet and legs. Removing shoes for the snowy months is safer for your horse and allows their feet to expand. If your horse needs to wear shoes year round, ask your farrier about snow pads. Wearing snow pads during the winter months will keep balls from forming.*

### *Choosing good hay*

*Important points to consider when identifying quality hay for your horses:*

- The leafier the better. Look for more flat leaves and fewer round stems.*
- Grab a handful of hay and give it a squeeze. Good hay will feel soft and pliable.*
- Hay with fewer seed heads or blooms is better for your horse.*
- Think of a freshly cut hay field; your hay should smell similar.*
- Avoid hay with dust, mold, weeds, trash and other foreign materials.*
- Look for bright green hay with little fading.*

### *Make Feed Changes Slowly*

*Remember to make changes to your horse's diet slowly over 5 - 10 days to avoid system upset. Horse's digestive systems need time to adjust from grazing green grass to eating dry hay. When adding supplements and grains, start out with small amounts for several days before adding more.*

## *Did You Know?*

*Colic is the number one killer of horses! Colic can be caused by many different things. Learn the signs and symptoms of colic and call your veterinarian. Colic is an emergency!*

## *Horse Sense - Water*

*Water is the most important nutrient that we provide for horses on a year around basis. Horses need two to three times more water than other feedstuffs.*

*A misconception in the winter time is that domestic horses can easily eat enough snow to survive. This isn't generally the case, so ensure horses have access to fresh, clean water at all times.*

*Horses drink, on average, 10 - 12 gallons of water a day. How many buckets of snow would that be?? Try an experiment this winter and melt a bucket of snow. See how much water is really in that much snow. You will be surprised! If a horse drinks 10 gallons of water, that is 83 pounds of water, every day!*

*Providing horses with fresh clean water at an appropriate temperature all year around is a great management tool to reduce the risk of colic, maintain healthy digestion, and maintain body condition.*

## *Measuring for a Blanket*

*If you wish to blanket your horse on these cold winter nights, you will want to make sure the blanket fits properly. A poorly fitting blanket could cause rubs and sores on your horse, or if too big, become dangerous.*

*To measure your horse for a blanket, you will first need someone to help hold your horse and the measuring tape.*

*Place the end of the measuring tape at the center of your horse's chest. Measure around the widest part of his shoulder, belly and hind quarter, to the point of buttock. Make sure your tape is straight and against the horse. This will give you the size blanket in inches that your horse should wear.*

## *Winter Horse Care Tips*

**More Calories:** People sometimes joke about “bulking up for winter,” but for horses that live outside, increasing calories is a very real need because it takes more calories to keep warm. Increasing the hay ration is a healthier option than increasing the grain ration. Horse owners should consult with a veterinarian about dietary management during the cold winter months.

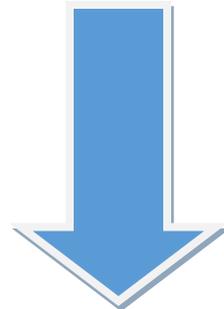
**Water, Not Ice:** Horses need abundant fresh water, even when it is cold outside

**Fresh Air:** Keeping your horse in a warm barn with the doors and windows closed is not necessarily a good thing. A well-ventilated barn, even if it means a drop of a few degrees in temperature, will keep the air fresher and healthier for your horse.

**Check Under Blankets:** Some horses that live outside year-round have their blanket on all winter. While blanketing might be necessary to keep your horse warm, it can sometimes hide things. Make sure you remove the blanket at least once a week so you can check for any new bumps, or changes in body condition. Remember that a long hair coat can hide a lot and you need to actually touch your horse to get an idea of condition

**Blanket Consistently:** Blanketing a horse will encourage less growth of the hair coat, so if you are going to blanket, be consistent.

Continue reading to find out about Barn Fires



## ***Safety - Barn Fires***

*Fires usually give little warning. Many barns are made of wood and/or contain many flammable items such as; hay, straw, wood shavings, leather, blankets, ropes, oils, etc. The burning rate of loose straw is approximately three times that of the burning rate of gasoline.*

***Fire prevention is an important part of horse ownership.***

- Keep barn isles clean and loose straw and hay picked up*
- Don't store oily rags or gasoline in the barn*
- Don't allow smoking in the barn*
- Check electrical wiring*
- Store feed and bedding materials a safe distance from barn*
- Spray weeds and clear debris from around the barn*

***In case of a barn fire:***

- Call 911*
- Evacuate people and horses*
- Open all access gates to the barn area*
- Keep roads clear for fire equipment*
- If safe, fight fire with available equipment*