

Inspection due for riding arenas

NORRISTOWN — Most horse owners realize that the footing in their riding arenas is all-important to the health and well-being of their horses. According to Jim Gallagher, Penn State Extension animal scientist, now is a good time to inspect your outdoor arena for the quality of its footing and overall condition.

Horses that are worked consistently on rough, hard-packed or rocky ground can develop serious leg ailments, notes Gallagher, especially if the animals are asked to jump or maneuver at high speed. That's why the footing in an arena must be level, resilient and free of stones.

When the spring thaw arrives in earnest, survey the surface conditions of your ring, suggests Gallagher. Your inspection probably will reveal rocks of all sizes that seem to have appeared from nowhere. A rutted, worn track may surround the ring, collecting water to form perpetual mudholes. In general, the footing in your outdoor arena may be uneven and dangerous due to the freezing and thawing conditions common in winter.

The first task is to remove the loose stones, a fairly simple but time-consuming job, continues Gallagher. If large rocks or boulders have surfaced over the

winter, dig them out and pack clay or cinders in the holes.

Next, decide if your arena should be resurfaced. Gallagher says it may be enough to rake the area with a harrow a few times to loosen and level the surface. On the other hand, you may need to incorporate four or five inches of sand in the area to improve the footing.

He notes that plowing up hardpan provides only temporary improvement because the soil will pack down again quickly once you begin using the arena. Sand, however, will drain well and remain loose and light if you harrow it regularly.

You may have to wet down sand occasionally in the summer to reduce dust, says Gallagher. Or you can achieve the same effect by applying oil to the surface two or three times a year.

To conclude your arena inspection, walk around the edge and make sure all the boards or rails are sturdy and free of large cracks, recommends Gallagher. Replace boards if necessary.

Pound in nails that have worked loose.

Consider adding a perspective, smooth board rail at the height of a mounted rider's knee, suggests Gallagher. Also, repair sagging gates.

If you take the time to inspect your outdoor riding arena, it will serve you and your horses well throughout the summer, concludes Gallagher.

Seeds must respond to economic times

KALAMAZOO, Mich. — Development of dramatic new seed varieties and hybrids will be one result of the widespread economic transition being experienced by agriculture.

Jim Fetrow, general manager of Asgrow Seed Company's U.S. agronomic operations, made this observation in a recent presentation to Asgrow executives at company headquarters in Kalamazoo, Mich.

In an age of skyrocketing energy costs, high interest rates, decreasing water supplies and reduced government price supports, Fetrow foresees new pressures being placed on seed companies to develop new varieties that will help farmers solve some of these tough economic problems.

For example, he pointed out that increasing energy costs will cause fertilizer expenses to increase at an alarming rate.

"If natural gas is completely deregulated, anhydrous ammonia costs could quadruple," Fetrow said.

"As a result, seed companies will need to make advances toward hybrids and varieties that are more efficient users of fertilizers," he explained. "We'll need soybeans that will fix more nitrogen, causing higher yields for the beans and leaving more residual nitrogen in the soil for the following corn crop."

In addition, he said that seed researchers will be giving priority to corn hybrids that dry down rapidly in the fields, without yield losses. This could greatly reduce artificial drying costs.

Fetrow also said that crops could

potentially be major contributors directly to U.S. fuel supplies.

"Soybean oil and sunflower oil can be burned in diesel engines," he said, "so research on varieties that have a high oil content is receiving priority. This may, in fact, be a more practical solution to the fuel problem than alcohol from corn."

Soil and water conservation is becoming another priority problem in agriculture, and Fetrow also foresees new varieties and hybrids being developed to help solve these problems.

"More than 50 percent of all tillable land has a serious erosion problem," he said. "This means a loss of more than 5 tons of soil per acre per year."

"And soybeans are one of the biggest culprits," he added. "It's estimated that one third of all soybean acreage—over 20 million acres—have soil losses ranging up to 50 cents per acre per year."

"At Asgrow, we're attempting to respond to this problem by

development of hybrids and varieties that have exceptional early vigor, compared to those in use now. The result of this research may well be the development of soybean varieties and corn, and sorghum hybrids that will grow and yield well in minimum tillage situations."

All in all, Fetrow foresees a strong decade for agriculture, once it's through the current transitional period.

"We're currently undergoing a change from '40 years of surpluses' into a 'yo-yo-ing' situation of alternate years of prosperity and gloom," Fetrow said.

"But operations with a sound financial base are weathering the storm quite well," he added. "In fact, many have become even stronger as a result. When this period is over in the early 1980s, there will be a trend toward consistent prosperity in agriculture," Fetrow predicted.

OUR READERS WRITE

Dear LF:

On behalf of the Lancaster County Conservation District, I would like to commend you for the excellent coverage of Soil Stewardship in the May 23, 1981 issue. I am totally in agreement with your editorial where you say many "modern" farmers have failed to get the soil conservation

message. Hopefully, your articles will get more farmers interested in soil and water conservation.

As you know, we have planning and technical assistance available, free for the asking.

Yours for a better environment,
Aaron Z. Stauffer,
Chairman, L.C.C.D.

Now Is The Time

(Continued from Page A10)

clean water to a known level. Then travel over the course at the desired rate of speed. Make sure you are up to full speed by the time you turn the spray on at the beginning of the course. Measure the amount of water applied by placing the spray tank in the same position and refilling to the same level.

Most wettable powders and emulsions call for 15 to 30 gallons of water per acre for good coverage. This means you should have applied 1½ to 3 gallons on the one-tenth acre plot.

It's very important to thoroughly check your sprayer before mixing expensive chemicals and starting into the field.

To Fertilize Alfalfa

Alfalfa is an important crop in our livestock program and every effort should be taken to maintain a healthy stand. This would include top-dressing, at least once a year, with a phosphorus-potash fertilizer to replenish the roots with these two major elements.

A very good time to make this application is after the removal of the first cutting. A well fertilized stand of alfalfa can withstand insects and other abuses much better than one lacking fertilization.

Keep in mind that the first cutting of alfalfa removes about one-half of the tonnage produced on an acre for the year, so a lot of plant food is used-up in the first cutting.

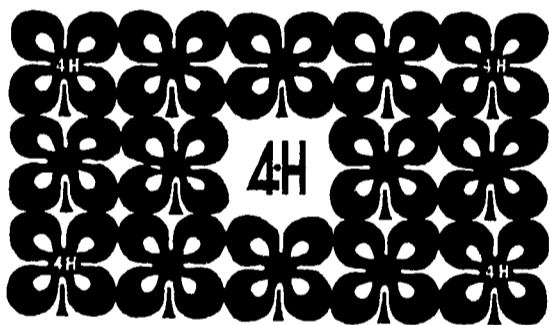
To Check for Ticks

The tick season is here. These pests may be on almost any dog or person that walks through uncultivated fields or woody areas from May to September.

Ticks await their victims on low-growing shrubs and on tall grass. They attack to, and feed on the blood of dogs, humans as well as many other animals.

There are two common kinds of ticks, the American dog tick and the brown dog tick. Both are brown, but the American dog tick has a mottled white shield on its back. The brown dog tick is a household pest and cannot survive our winters outdoors.

To control the American dog tick, first clean the area of tall grass and weeds on which the ticks await their victims. Also treat bushes 20 to 30 feet on either side of paths with either Sevin, Diazinon or Lindane. The dog should also be treated with a 5 percent Sevin dust at weekly intervals or as needed for control of either the American dog tick or the brown dog tick.



M.H. EBY, INC.
Manufacturer of All Aluminum Truck Bodies
Livestock, Grain & Bulk Feed

Aluminum Livestock Body

Distributor of **TIMPT** Refrigerated Trailers
Sales & Service
Blue Ball, Pa. 717-354-4971

DRY 1,000 BU./HR.*
WITH STORMOR®
EZEE-DRY®

*Shelled corn, 10 points of moisture.

This means that with the 36' EZEE-DRY you can quickly get wet grain into safe storage condition, even during heavy harvest demand. And when the EZEE-DRY is not at work as a dryer it serves as a storage bin with a capacity of over 19,000 bushels

Give us a call to find out how the EZEE-DRY can fit your present drying needs. And if you need additional grain storage, we also feature Super Bins with capacities up to 152,000 bushels for big storage jobs.

U.S. Patents 3,479,748 and 3,501,845
 Foreign Patents Pending

Contact us, we'll design the grain drying and storage system you need.

LOUCKS GRAIN EQUIPMENT, INC.
 R.D. 12, Box 307
 York, PA 17406
 Phone: (717) 755-2868

Stormor and EZEE DRY are registered trademarks of Stormor, Inc.