

# Kid's KOrner

## University gets wild horse research grant

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A \$40,000 contract for research on the reproductive patterns of wild horses and burros has been awarded to Utah State University, Logan, Utah, by the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management, according to BLM Director Robert F. Burford.

The research effort is one of a series of projects devised by BLM and the National Academy of Sciences following passage of the 1978 amendments to the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971. The amendments directed BLM to work with NAS in developing research to gain additional knowledge that would assist the Bureau in managing and controlling wild horses and burros on the public lands.

The study to be conducted by Utah State University will focus on the breeding ages and rates of wild horses and burros. A report on study findings during an 11-month

period is due by June 1, 1982. The contract includes an option for an additional year of research at an additional \$40,000 cost, with a final report due June 30, 1983.

Officially titled "An Initial Study of Wild Horse and Burro Demography," the USU research project will concentrate on mares and jennies at BLM's wild horse and burro corrals at Palomino Valley, Nevada; Rock Springs, Wyoming; Burns, Oregon; Kingman, Arizona; and Camp Pendleton, California. Co-principal investigators will be Dr. Michael L. Wolfe, USU Department of Wildlife Science, and Dr. LeGrande C. Ellis, USU Department of Biology.

BLM each year removes some 10,000 excess horses and burros from damaged or threatened areas of the public rangelands in 10 western States and places them in the care of private citizens through

an adoption program. Since 1976, more than 30,000 animals have been placed in foster homes throughout the United States. Information on this adoption program is available from "Adopt-A-Horse", Dept. 618-J, Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, CO 81009.

The research projects recommended by NAS are detailed in a report titled Wild and Free-Roaming Horses and Burros: Current Knowledge and Recommended Research. Copies of this report are available from National Technical Information Service, U.S. Department of Commerce, Springfield, VA 22161, 703/487-4650, Report No. BLM/AA/SR-81/01. Copies of the 382-page report are available at \$27.50 per copy, or on microfiche for \$3.50 per copy.

BLM is currently funding three additional research projects recommended by the Academy:

—Studies of wild horse habitat preference and use, and vegetation response to grazing and its effects on the diet and nutritional status of wild horses and cattle. Awarded to the University of Wyoming, Laramie, on June 1, 1980, the project calls for a total expenditure of \$792,483, of which BLM will pay \$720,000 and the University \$72,483. Final results are due by August 16, 1982.

—A study of census methods of wild horses and burros. Costing \$268,000 over a two-year period, the contract was awarded on July 15, 1980, to the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. A final report is due by June 30, 1982, and a technical manual describing appropriate census methods for use by BLM is due September 30, 1982.

—Food consumption rates and nutrition of wild horses and cattle. A contract for this research, costing \$184,000, was awarded to



Colorado State University, Fort Collins, on May 1, 1980, with a report due by April 30, 1982.



A well-taken care of horse can end up a champion, like this Arabian filly. Saf Gaylima was the reserve junior champion of the recent Keystone International Livestock Exposition.

The filly is owned by Maureen Bachman of Manheim. Bachman's daughter Micki Perry is at the halter.

## Buying your first horse

LANCASTER — With horseback riders dotting the trails and roadsides around the country, many non-horse owners may want to get a horse and join this active group.

Horse ownership is a serious undertaking and must be given thorough consideration, however.

Along with the pleasures of trail riding, horse shows, and other events, come the responsibilities of caring for the new companion.

The kind of riding and activities will determine the type or breed of horse to purchase. All breeds were originally developed for a specific purpose. Yet through the years, many of these original uses have been modified.

Certain breeds make good "cow" horses, other are better as show animals, while some are noted as trail horses.

Age and sex are important factors to consider when purchasing your first horse. Horses mature at four to five years of age. Immature, untrained horses are not recommended for new horse owners. The degree of training and safety of the horse is more important than the actual age.

For a first horse, one should look at 12 to 16 year olds for quiet, mild-mannered animals which should give six to eight years of service. Stallions are definitely not recommended for new owners.

Mares can be a problem when in heat during the spring and summer months, but have the advantage of becoming broodmares at a later date.

Geldings are usually stable and may be the preference for a first horse.

A big question is where to buy that all-important horse. Breeders are interested in promoting their product and usually stand behind the horses they sell. Normally, however, they do not have older, well-trained animals for sale, but market young show quality horses.

A reputable horse dealer who is known for honesty and integrity throughout the community can usually find a suitable horse. The dealer should be willing to allow you to try the horse for a few days. A well-established business person knows that a good reputation for honest dealing is more important than a few fast dollars.

New owners should require a negative Coggins test which notes that the horse does not have Equine Infectious Anemia. There is no known cure for this disease, according to Nancy Kedwill, Montgomery county agent. Pennsylvania will not allow a horse to enter or leave the state without a negative Coggins test.

A veterinarian pre-purchase exam of the horse is always advisable at the expense of the prospective owner.

Horseback riding is an extremely popular sport. It is fun, and an excellent family activity. But before purchasing a horse, give careful consideration to the responsibilities involved.

## Prepare your horse for winter

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — A horse going into winter is likely to stay healthy with plenty of exercise, a proper shelter, appropriate diet and medical care. The horseowner should outline a health program for the horse designed according to the circumstances under which it is kept.

How much you ride your horse or how much exercise it gets determines the kinds of care that should be taken. A horse should be able to go freely in and out of its shelter and be kept in a pen large enough for it to move around a lot on its own. A lazy horse can be forced to get exercise by walking to food and water which you can place away from the shelter. Make sure fresh water is available and that it doesn't freeze.

Dr. Robert Hammond, veterinary specialist at the University of Maryland, says a full-sized horse should have a shelter 12 feet long, 12 feet wide and 10 feet tall with an entrance away from the prevailing wind. He says that horses do not have to be kept warm and adds that, in many cases, respiratory problems develop when shelters are heated.

Each day a horse will eat about 2 to 2 1/2 pounds of feed per 100 pounds of body weight. In late fall, the horse changes from eating grass to eating hay. You can make this change gradually by feeding the horse hay while it is still in the pasture. The hay should be of high quality "not anything that's moldy or extremely dusty." Hammond says a horse that is not ridden can be maintained with hay but a working horse should be fed grain as well.

If horses are not ridden a lot, their shoes should be taken off because there is a chance that the horse may gradually become lame if the feet grow out with the shoes on. To help prevent any foot diseases or infections, keep the floor of the horse's shelter as clean and dry as possible.

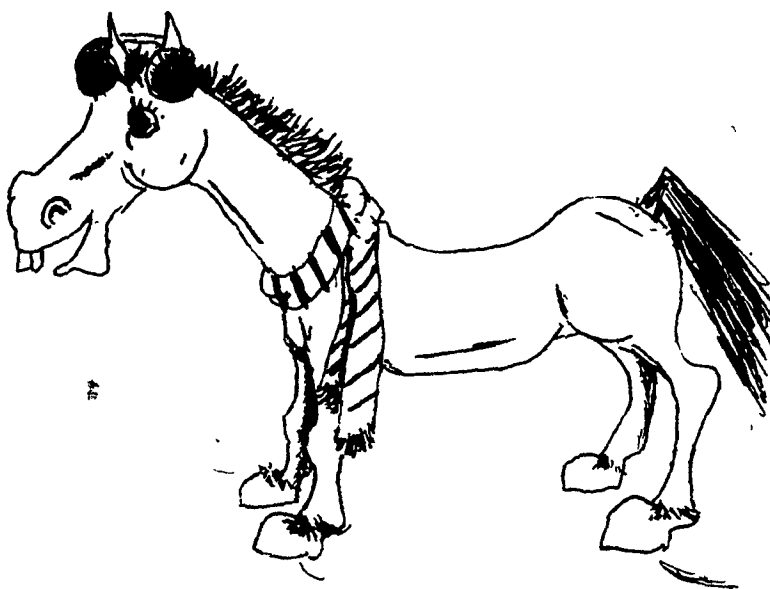
Unlike the dental growth pattern of people, horses' teeth grow continuously, often growing unevenly. They should be checked at least once a year and in a process called "floating the teeth" the sharp points can be eliminated.

Keeping horses groomed by using a curry comb and brush improves circulation in the skin

and gives them a better hair coat, Dr. Hammond says.

As well as keeping your horse healthy-looking on the outside, you must treat any problems which may develop internally. One such problem is when horses ac-

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Is your horse ready for winter?



Ancient drawings on stone and bone attest to the fact that horse racing is at least 3000 years old.