



**Ask the  
VMD**

Leon Riegel



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**A reader asks:** I recently lost a horse due to azoturia. Could you give me information on this condition and advice on how to avoid it in the future?

**Dr. Sheaffer comments:**  
Azoturia is a disease of muscle metabolism brought on by exercise after relatively long periods of rest. The dark-colored urine contains myoglobin muscle pigment.

The myoglobin is released into the blood stream when the muscle tissue breaks down. This is due to a lactic acid buildup in the absence of adequate oxygen supply. The myoglobin causes kidney damage when it passes into the urine.

It's likely your horse did not recover due to permanent kidney damage. Several steps should be taken to prevent the problem from recurring.

✓The horse should be fed less grain on the days it is not used.

✓The horse needs some exercise every day, even if it is just an hour each morning in a barn yard or small pasture.

✓Make sure the horse is fed adequate levels of vitamins and minerals in the diet. Vitamin E and selenium should be supplemented at slightly higher amounts than recommended.

If this disease occurs in another horse, have immediate veterinary attention. Prompt treatment with diuretics, fluids, calcium preparations, as well as anti-inflammatory medications and vitamin E-selenium injections

may produce a more favorable outcome.

One final important point about treating an affected horse — keep it warm and do not force it to move.

## Lancaster Holstein club revitalizes Conestoga Classic

LANCASTER — The Lancaster County Holstein Club recently announced plans to revitalize a county-wide Holstein sale, which was discontinued in the 1950's, said president Lamar Witmer.

The "Conestoga Classic," scheduled for August 11 at the Lampeter Fair Grounds at 7 p.m., will provide a service to Club members as well as offer 50 well-bred Holstein cattle to interested buyers, Witmer explained.

June 15 is the deadline to consign an animal, but selections are being made now by a committee representing each part of the county. Anyone wishing to consign an animal should contact one of the following: northwest Lancaster County, Robert Kauffman, 367-3550 or Lamar Witmer, 665-3778; northern, Galen Crouse, 215/287-6726; eastern, John Howard, 464-5004; southeastern, Elvin Hess, 687-6697; southern, Paul Welk, 548-2597; and southwestern, Jay Landis, 872-8818.

The committee is looking primarily for young cows, ideally two, three or four year olds. The only exception would be an exceptionally high scoring older cow.

These young cows should have the potential to be classified Very Good, be sired by popular sires and have a Good Plus or better dam with above average production.

A few bred heifers, yearlings and calves will be considered. These animals must have a high Very Good or Excellent dam with high production and a high cow index. Chairman John Howard explained that, in each category, popular A.I. sires are a must.

Commission for the sale management will be 10 percent for the first \$5,000 and 5 percent for any portion over \$5,000. There will be a \$10 catalogue fee to be refunded for all animals sold.

The sale will be conducted by R. Austin Backus, with the Pennsylvania Holstein Association clerking and handling paperwork and checks.

Economically, the best solution for erosion problems, in terms of the value of topsoil and other costs, is to control them at their source by using proven conservation measures.

## Engle gives sheep shearing pointers

UNIVERSITY PARK — Spring is the time for shearing sheep, Clair Engle, Extension animal specialist at Penn State, says. "Early spring shearing makes ewes more comfortable as the days grow warmer."

Early shorn ewes take less barn space, produce a lighter shrinking, higher quality fleeces, milk better, are more sanitary for new-born lambs and the lambs will grow more rapidly. Engle recommends shelter for at least two weeks after shearing. Give the sheep the choice of being inside or out.

It takes 12 months to produce a fleece of wool and Engle urges

care in shearing to insure top value for the wool. He emphasizes the following points:

— Sheep must be dry at the time of shearing;

— Keep straw, hay, and chaff out of the fleece by using feeders that limit contact;

— Shear on a clean floor and keep it clean;

— Remove dung locks;

— Burrs, seeds, and any foreign matter reduce fleece value;

— Avoid second cuts in the shearing process; the second cuts shorten the wool fibre and reduce its value;

— Roll fleece with clean or skin side out;

— The fleece with paper twine — use no other;

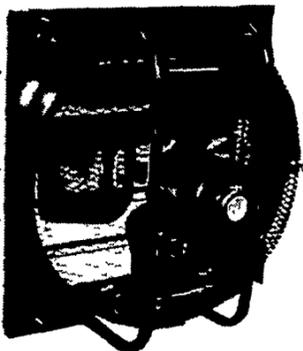
— Do not tie name tags, identification, fleeces or bags with binder or sisal twine;

— Store wool in a clean, well ventilated shelter until it goes to market.

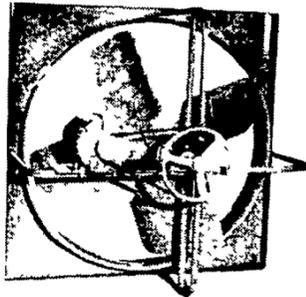
If you hire someone to do your shearing, plan your schedule so that you can be there to assist with some other management tasks. Proper preparation of the fleece is important. It also is a good time for tending to such chores as trimming feet, treating internal/external parasites, and checking for spoiled udders and broken mouths

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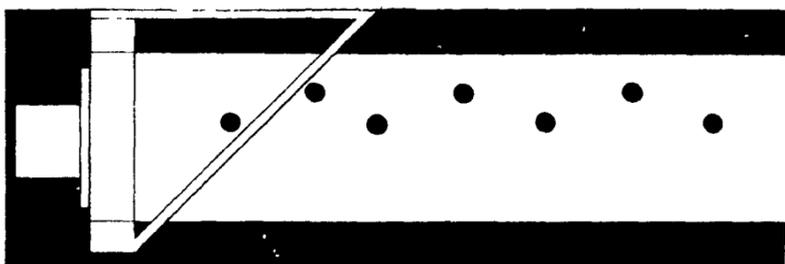
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