

Equine Alert To Avoid Disaster

Jeffrey M. Edelson V.M.D.
Horses should eat only what horses normally eat. Dried hay or grass pasture, clean oats, or commercial horse feed and fresh water. Too often our good intentions or lack of knowledge results in disaster.

Horses have very sensitive intestinal systems and cannot tolerate change. Inadvertent change comes from the introduction of strange materials or when someone feeds the wrong food or too much of anything. It is also worse when the horse gets loose and eats too much.

The following items have resulted in the foolish loss of no less than 30 horses in our practice in 1999. Most of these examples happen with regularity and all too often result in severe sickness and/or death from colic, which shows up as a severe bellyache with pawing the ground as a sign of pain to rolling violently; to foundering which is a circulatory problem resulting in severe changes to

the feet.

The "Ag Bag"-the horses that get loose and get into silage stored in the Ag Bags or other storage systems and expose horses to feed stuff they are not used to. Silage is a form of fermenting or mildly decaying plant material that is very high in Botulism spores. Horses affected with Botulism are almost assured of the slow death unless they have been vaccinated against Botulism. Muscles do not work because the botulism toxin blocks the nerve pathway. The horse dies from not being able to swallow and breathe.

The pasture is a dumping ground for junk. Not only the metal and glass kind that's obviously a danger, but the plant kind also. Each year the good intentioned neighbor or family member puts over the fence grass clippings, vines, ewe branch clippings, watermelon rines, egg shells, and anything else imaginable. Horses are curious and they tend to nibble.

Molds are a disaster when they are in the food supply. Horses usually cannot tolerate the molds and that can cause disaster ending in colic or founder. Any hay or grain that is moldy should be discarded. A less common thought of mold comes from grass clippings or corn husks and cobs. These materials start to ferment within an hour after being cut from the yard and piled in the hot sun. Corn on the cob for dinner

starts with corn husks.

Every good intentioned neighbor or household member wants to "feed the horses" so a pile of rapidly fermenting material ends up in the pasture. Tree trimmings, piles of leaves or evergreen branches can be a disaster. Japanese Ywe is a common plant and trimmed regularly. A very large horse will usually die with the trimmings still in their mouth-the toxin is that fast in its action.

Earlier this month we lost three mares in their last trimester pregnancies due to "vines" from the garden that were dumped into the pasture. Death was extremely violent and the loss to the farmer was very costly since they were prime breeding stock.

Alert all members on the farm, kids and especially "good intentioned neighbors" NOT to put anything into the pasture, not even the grass clippings and corn husks/cobs. They can make the horses very sick and even kill them.

Northeast Order

BOSTON, Mass. — Erik Rasmussen, Market Administrator for the Northeast Marketing Area, has announced that the statistical uniform price for February 2000 is \$12.21 per hundredweight or \$1.05 per gallon for milk delivered to plants located in Suffolk County, Mass.

The statistical uniform price is the benchmark minimum producer blend price paid to dairy farmers, prior to allowable deductions, for milk containing 3.5 percent butterfat, 2.99 percent protein, and 5.69 percent other solids. The price received by individual dairy farmers will vary as the component composition of a farm's milk differs from the established benchmarks.

Rasmussen also stated that the producer price differential (PPD) for February is \$2.67 per hundredweight for milk delivered to plants located in Suffolk, Mass. The February PPD is \$2.57 in New York, NY, and \$2.46 in Philadelphia.

The Class prices for milk pooled in February are as follows: Class I - \$13.96 (Suffolk Co., MA), Class II - \$11.51, Class III - \$9.54, and Class IV - \$10.80. Had the Northeast Order been in effect in 1999, comparable class prices for February 1999 would have been: Class I - \$20.15, Class II - \$13.72, Class III - \$11.335, and Class IV - \$12.71. The component values for February are protein - \$1.9849 per pound,

butterfat - \$0.9588 per pound, other solids - \$0.0432 per pound, and nonfat solids - \$0.8565 per pound.

Milk receipts from producers totaled 2.034 billion pounds. Class I utilization, milk processed as beverage milk, was 41.3 percent of producer milk receipts.

Sets Swine Meeting

ELIZABETH-TOWN (Lancaster Co.) - White Oak Mills has announced that independent pork producers are invited to a free White Oak Mills 2000 Swine Meeting, "Competing in the 21st Century."

The seminar will be Wednesday, April 12, from 9 a.m. to approximately 2:15 p.m. at Wizard Catering's Acorn Farms Conference Center, Mount Joy.

Seminar topics will include:

- "Competing in the 21st Century" at 9:30 a.m.
- "Sow Herd Health Challenges" at 10 a.m.
- "Profitably Managing Herd Health" or PQA Certification at 11 a.m.
- "SEW and Finishing Advancements" at 12:45 p.m.
- "Using Pig Postmortems as a Tool for Understanding Herd Health" at 1:30 p.m.

White Oak Mills' key speakers will be Dale Dues and Dr. Kevin Cera, both from Akey Inc., Ohio, and Dr. Dale Hendrickson, Stoney Creek Veterinary Services, Indiana.

Chet Hughes, Lancaster County extension, will lead the 11 a.m. PQA certification for producers who are interested.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. A pork barbecue lunch will be served at noon.

To reserve a seat at this educational event, call White Oak Mills' at (800) 468-5524 by noon Friday, April 7.



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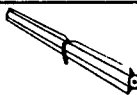
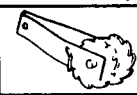

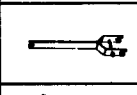

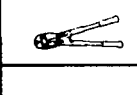




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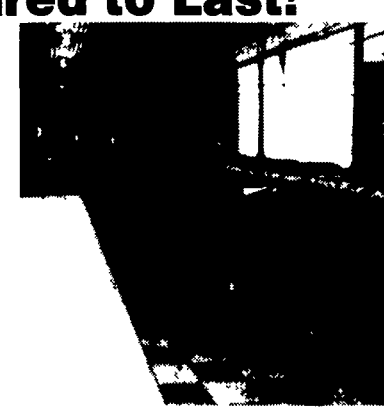



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