

(Continued from Page 60)

ent food supplies, exposure to harsh weather, disease and predators all take their toll on wild herds. From an evolutionary perspective, there was no need to worry about the teeth once the horse got very old. This would be like Ford Motor Company worry over whether the alternator would still work in a Taurus with four hundred thousand miles on it. But now 'Old Pokey' is staring me in the face and I want to try to help him.

First, I'll ask some questions of the owner about his history: How old do you think he is; has he been sick lately; how long have you owned him; what is he fed; and such. Then I'll examine him. Since I'm mostly interested in his teeth (I leave the rest of his health concerns to his regular veterinarian), I examine his mouth carefully. To do this, I use an oral speculum. A speculum holds open the horse's mouth so I can examine and work without worrying about getting bitten. Most of the time I will mildly sedate the horse so he will relax and not get too excited. I'm never sure what I'll find when I examine these older horses.

Old horses have a hard time eating hay and grain. In fact, many old horses cannot eat these feeds at all. They will try to eat hay, for example, but when they cannot chew it up well enough to swallow it, they spit out the wad of partially chewed hay on the ground. This is called "quidding." That mouthful of food left on the stall floor is lost calories to the horse. All the food in the world will not help a horse if he cannot eat it.

What is needed is a modified diet that is balanced and easily digested by 'Old Pokey.' Luckily, there are a variety of specialized feeds that help meet these requirements. Combining a special diet and other management practices, often these older horses respond very well. Of course, there are other factors that can affect the health of the geriatric horse. It is important to remember that older horses may not be able to compete with their younger stablemates for food and shelter. Research also suggests that old horses have an increased vulnerability to parasites and other infections. Medical problems should be addressed by the owner and their veterinarian.

## Read Lancaster Farming Every Week

THE NEWS YOU CAN USE

For editorial, subscription, or advertising information,  
call 717-626-1164 or fax 717-733-6058.

**Dairy cows respond to consistency.  
Here's a little help in providing it.**



Diamond V Yeast Culture is the proven rumen microbe nutrient source that practically all other feed additives of this type compare themselves to. And while some would like you to believe they are "the same as Diamond V" it is just plain not true. Unlike additives containing "live" yeast cells which pose an inherent risk of instability, Diamond V Yeast Culture is *fermentation fortified*.™ Our proprietary, multi-stage, fermentation and drying process stabilizes the entire biomass to ensure your cows consume a uniform, stable product proven by extensive research to be an effective, reliable nutrient source for rumen bacteria.

**Corporate Offices:**

838 1st Street NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405

Fax # 319-366-6333

**800-373-7234**

[www.diamondv.com](http://www.diamondv.com)



**Diamond V**  
**YEAST CULTURE**