

EQUINE NEWSLETTER



WINTER 2010

*“HORSES
CANNOT
BREATHE
THROUGH
THEIR
MOUTHS”*

By: COWBOYWAY.COM

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Horse Genes?

A group of international scientists, including three researchers from Texas A&M, have completed (for the first time) the genome sequence of the horse. This may give way to improved breeding, disease treatment and even enhanced performance traits.

The group took DNA from a single Thoroughbred mare for the sequencing project.

“One thing we learned from the project is that the structure of the chromosomes in the horse are similar to other animals, including humans.” Skow (A&M researcher) says. Researchers feel this advancement will help scientist better understand disease resistance, reproduction, fertility, etc.

Br: Farms.com

Winter Feeding

If nothing else was learned from the hay shortage in 2008, an animal caretaker should know how much feed it will take to maintain those animals through the winter. If unsure, asking for assistance would help, either from another producer, hay supplier or county agent.

There are a couple of reasons for this precaution. One, you don't want to run out of feedstuff in the middle or later part of winter. Finding another supplier could be difficult, not to mention the possible increase in cost. This brings up the other benefit of knowing the amount of feed you will need. Most suppliers (especially hay) will offer better deals on larger quantities of hay, even if you don't have room to store it all.

Once the amount has been established, the next most important topic is the methods of feeding the horse. Keep in mind that limit feeding hay is not a good idea (unless vet has instructed) as horses

are forages, which means the majority of their diet should be grass and/or hay. The method that you feed hay during the winter dramatically impacts the pasture that will be available next year. If pastures are in good shape then a producer might want to feed all the hay in a heavy use area and/or stall. Hay can be fed out in pastures if the hay and/or feeder is moved frequently to prevent mud areas (this destroys the sod and increases weed growth). This feeding situation is also good for marginal pastures. The moving of the feeding area around the pasture provides added nutrients to the soil through manure deposits and wasted hay. This method should force the animals and the producer to utilize other parts of the pasture. Moving feeders from gates to the fence line area closest to the barn doesn't count for distributing nutrients.



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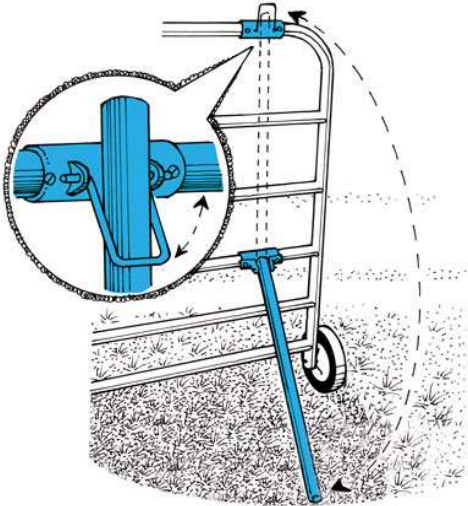
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Great Idea

To keep gates open in the wind, I built a folding bracket made from 2" exhaust pipe and a ¾"-thin wall pipe.

The pipe is attached to rotate at the bottom (about two rungs up the gate) and fit into a latch on the top rung.



When I open the gate, I slide the pipe from the latch; it catches the ground and the gate stays put. Then, when closing the gate, I slide the pipe back into the latch. It's the extra hand that's always there when I need it.

By: Farm Journal \$100 Idea

Allard Christenson, Mn.

Breed Profile Gypsy Horse

Color: Black & white predominant to almost solid, other colors possible

Stature: 14-15.1 hands

Origin: England, maybe Ireland, but from gypsy culture

Brought to US: 1996

Purpose: "all around horse"

Coat: feathering from the knees and hock joints down, covering the entire hoof. Mane, forelock and tail should be ample to profusely abundant. Double manes are possible.

eager to please, confident, alert and loyal

- Can be seen in the dressage ring, show ring (western saddle, hunt seat & saddle seat), hunter hack, herding cattle & trail rides



- Late developers, fully grown at 5 years
- Management: break in at 3-4 years and wean at 6-7 months
- Developed by the gypsy culture to have flashy horse to match the bright colored wagons, strong enough to pull but require minimal feed

By: American Gypsy Horse Assoc.



Facts

- Healthy, hardy and strong
- Perfect for the disabled rider who benefits from their tractable and gentle nature
- A strain of the cob horse
- Mannerly & manageable,



Ranch Quiz

1. One mL equals ____cc?
2. Animals develop a comfortable space around them; as a person enters the space the animal becomes tense. This space is called the animal's ____?
3. Thread-like structures that contain genes are called?

Answer Key
1. One 2. Flight Zone 3. Chromosomes



Farm Safety

Unfortunately, many precautions are relaxed for kids that live on the farm. If kids are to help out on the farm they should be treated like employees at that location. Meaning don't let kids play and rough house in area where animals and or equipment will be utilizing. Kids need to learn to respect the situation/environment.

Some good practices:

- Don't ever let a child ride on the fender (feet on the floor). There isn't anything much to hold onto plus there are areas that feet can slide into or through.
- Fence off ponds. Most importantly, this deters children from drowning when not supervised. Other factors also encourage fencing.
- Don't allow children of any age to operate equipment and ATV vehicles until they have had the proper training and showed sufficient skills to operate.
- No one should ride the draw bar of the tractor. The platform isn't large enough for sturdy footing. Also individuals at this location are exposed to a lot of moving parts, not to mention that an individual can't see in front of the tractor (to prepare for obstacles such as bumps and holes.)
- Keep larger more aggressive animals unexcessable to children.
- Never allow children to be in animal areas or equipment areas without supervision or the proper training. Don't assume they know because they are growing up there and have seen you do it!

Establishing Pasture

Whether sowing a virgin stand or renovating an existing stand, now is the time to plan. In this region, fescue is the predominate grass. The main reason is that fescue will withstand a lot of abuse. As many are concerned about the endophyte infected fescue, consulting with an unbiased expert might result in good results and cost savings. Regardless which variety you choose, planning should start now while most plants are dormant.

The best time to sow grass is in the fall (mid-September through late-October). Spring seeding can be practiced but for most, it is not as successful as the fall planting. Spring planting struggles with cold soil temperatures and weed surge. Fall planting tends to have less issues with seed rot and virtually no issues with cold soil temperatures. The fall also allows for a better opportunity to control weeds. Many herbicides are not effective below 65 degrees. On average, fescue, regardless of variety, should be sown at 15-20 pounds to the acre.

If considering planting an endophyte free or novel endophyte variety, you should take extra efforts to control seed production of infected fescue (K-31). In the spring the area designated for planting should be grazed or mowed tightly to prevent seed production. The area can also be controlled with herbicide, glyphosate (Roundup), which will probably need to be applied a couple of times before planting. Due to the cost of the seed, labor and rest period for establishment, the best planting tool is a no-till drill. These drills can be rented on a per acre basis from several sources including your local Soil and Water Office.



When selecting varieties, check the germination rate on the bag. It should be at least 90% and preferably higher, 95% germination. In preparation for planting, taking a soil sample and applying the recommended additives at the proper time will increase your success (i.e. lime is best applied in the fall & nitrogen shouldn't be applied until planting or shortly after). Once seedlings are coming in nice and thick, don't get too anxious. These tender plants should not be grazed below 6 inches during at least the first 6 months. Therefore, you probably need to wait for the leaves to be at least 10 inches before allowing animals to graze. On new stand, avoid grazing in wet times. The root system isn't established well and will get muddier faster than other pasture, not to mention the damage to the plants.

If you plan and are patient with establishment, it will pay for itself for years to come.

Mortality Disposal

Unfortunately, death loss is a fact of life on the farm. Hopefully, it isn't a major issue or other appropriate measures may need to be examined. However, the question is what to do with animals that have passed on the farm. There are several different options available to producers. They are rendering, composting, incineration, landfill and on-site burial.

Rendering has some advantages and disadvantages. The main advantage is it removes the dead animal from the property. Normally, the charge is minimal and will vary from one company to another. The main disadvantage is the animal must be less than 24 hours passed (more than that and they will refuse). Two companies that service the area are LeeWay Farms at 336-352-4740 and B & B Farms at 919-742-5564. Helpful hint:: call to check charges and what animals are accepted.

Composting is a legitimate practice on the farm. However specifics won't be listed here due to space. If interested in this practice, call your local livestock agent.

Incineration is not usually economical for larger animals (bigger than poultry) and smaller farms.

Some county landfills will dispose of dead animals. The sites should be called before delivery.

On-site burial is typically the most common method of disposal. Unfortunately, decomposition takes longer and many struggle with depth to keep scavengers/predators from digging up the animal. An onsite burial needs to be within 48 hours of death and must be 200' from water wells.

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Until next time....
See ya!

Events Calendar

Jan 23	Va. Draft Horse & Mule Assoc. Mtg. & Dinner, Culpepper, Va.; call 703-754-3274 or doxn7004@yahoo.com
Jan 26	Information: Reproduction (Dr. Cindy Eaton), Lillington; call 910- 893-7532 or dan_wells@ncsu.edu
Feb 3-5	Southern Farm Show, Raleigh; call 800-849-0248 ext 114 or www.southernfarmshows.com
Feb 28	Second Annual Gullah Festival Marsh Tacky Beach Races, Hilton Head, SC; call 843-562-7774
Mar 20-21	Paso Fino Open House & Carnival Show, Gainesville, Ga.; call 256-828-1060 or paso64@mchsi.com

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