



Kids n' Horses News

May...HOORAY!!

Howdy to all the 4-H Horse Project members in Kansas!

This is the May, 2019 edition of the Kids n' Horses Newsletter to help keep you informed about 4-H Horse events happening around the state; AND give you a little educational information too!

Be sure to re-enroll in 4-H in your county and update your 4-H Horse ID Certificate. You can complete and submit your 4-H Horse ID Certificate for the 2018-19 4-H year anytime now, but the sooner the better. **They are due MAY 1st.** Reminder: This form should be printed on 1 piece of paper with the photo of the horse attached.

The Kansas 4-H Horse Show Rule book is posted online at <https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/S133.pdf> !! Be sure to make yourself familiar with it before you attend 4-H shows; especially the KSF 4-H Horse Show. This rule book will be used at District & State 4-H Horse Shows. There are several rule changes; please read it carefully. To get a copy, contact your local Extension Office or the Kansas 4-H Horse Show Rule Book. Make sure it is the Revised Spring Spring 2018 edition.

If you would like to submit an article or have a horse event you would like to publicize, please e-mail that information to Jean at jhuntley@ksu.edu.

Happy trails and safe riding!

Dates to Remember:

- May 1 4-H Horse Identification papers MUST BE SIGNED by County Agent, 4-H'ers and parent
- June 27 South Central 4-H District Horse Show, Hutchinson
Entry deadline June 10
- June 27 South West 4-H District Horse Show, Dodge City
Entry deadline June 15
- June 27 South East 4-H District Horse Show, Parsons
Entry deadline June 15
- June 27 North East 4-H District Horse Show, Topeka
Entry deadline June 1
- July 1 North Central 4-H District Horse Show, Salina
Entry deadline June 1
- July 3 North West 4-H District Horse Show, Oakley
Entry deadline June 14th
- July 9 East Central 4-H District Horse Show, Lawrence
Entry deadline TBD



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Top Tips for Feeding Your Horse This Spring

As the weather changes, so too should your feeding program as your show horse ups his activity. Feeding your horse during the longer days and warmer temperatures of the spring season can often be different than your chosen winter-feeding program.

Keep the following diet and feeding considerations in mind to help your horse smoothly transition from winter to spring:

Tip 1: Monitor Your Horse's Body

Condition We all know every horse is different. This means that some horses will have gained winter weight from working less, while other horses will have shed a few pounds keeping warm in the cold. Before even thinking of altering your horse's spring-feeding regimen, first evaluate his body condition. With the help of your veterinarian or a knowledgeable equine professional, determine if your horse is too skinny, too fat or carrying just the right amount of weight.

To monitor your horse's weight without using a scale, you can utilize the body condition scoring method. This system will help you estimate the fat present on your horse's body. Once you have estimated the level of fat cover, you will be able to more accurately determine whether you should increase or decrease your horse's caloric intake.

It is important to note that each horse will require a different body condition level that is dependent on a number of factors, including: age, level of work, breed, current or past injuries, etc.

Tip 2: Don't Forget About Concentrates

(Grain) Many horses are fed grain on a daily basis. Throughout winter some horses need extra grain to maintain their ideal body weight, while other horses have their grain reduced, due to inactivity. Adjusting the type and amount of concentrate or grain your horse consumes should be done slowly and carefully. A horse's internal digestive system is built for slow changes.

With this in mind, monitor his level of work and body condition. If your horse's work level is increased, he might need to receive more grain.

Conversely, if his work level remains the same, and he is able to safely consume spring grasses, then your horse might need to receive fewer concentrates.

Whatever adjustments are made, make sure your horse is still receiving the appropriate level of essential nutrients, such as amino acids, vitamins and minerals. Achieving this may require a change in the feed product being used. Horses requiring additional calories could be bumped up to a higher-calorie performance horse feed, while those needing fewer calories could go down to a ration balancer product.

Tip 3: Horses Tend to Eat A lot of Forage

It is no secret that horses eat a lot of forage. However, what most people don't know is that a horse's forage is only as good as the fiber that it contains. Pastures often lay dormant during winter, which can reduce a horse's natural intake of grass forage. As a result, many equestrians will feed their horses extra forage via hay or beet pulp. This feeding tactic can be great for the cold months, but it should be re-evaluated in spring.

When spring arrives, most pasture paddocks will be filled with new grasses rich in sugar. Monitor your horse's body condition score as it begins to consume the rich green grasses. Horses that gorge themselves on spring grasses may encounter some serious health issues. For example, overweight horses or those with Cushing's disease, insulin resistance or laminitis will need to be carefully monitored. High sugar and starch levels of spring grass can aggravate the latter conditions. In these instances, reduced turnout time or a grazing muzzle can help limit pasture intake for certain at-risk horses.

Tip 4: Lots of Fresh Water This last suggestion holds true in any season: Horses need to have access to plenty of fresh water 24 hours a day. Warmer temperatures and an increase in body sweat can result in dehydration. Make sure that your horse has water access post workout. You can also add electrolyte supplements to your horse's feed. These supplements can help replenish essential nutrients during particularly warm or hot weather. Of course, consult your veterinarian if you have further questions.

Spring is a fantastic time of year. It is a chance to shed bulky winter clothing and spend time riding to your heart's content. However, spring is also a time that a horse's body condition should be properly monitored. If you need to make any changes to your horse's spring feeding regime, be sure to make the changes slowly and consult a nutritionist or your veterinarian for advice or guidance.

Source: AQHA Daily, March 19, 2019

Smart Shots and Deworming

Here are clear guidelines for horse vaccinations and deworming products.

One of the most confusing aspects of horse ownership can be sorting out annual vaccinations and deworming plans. There are so many different shots and deworming products available on the market today, how do you know what to use and when? The following simple explanations and charts should help shed some light on this confusing issue.

Equine Vaccinations

In March of 2008, the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) revised its recommendations for vaccinating your horse. Vaccines have been divided into two types: (1) core vaccines, which are recommended for all horses based on risk of death to your horse if exposed to these viruses, and (2) vaccines that should be given based on risk of exposure to certain viruses. Several prominent factors that play a part in exposure risk include: how much your horse travels or is exposed to horses who have traveled, the likelihood that you may breed any of your mares, and the developing immune systems of young foals.

Core vaccinations. "Core" vaccinations are the ones you don't want to skip. Risk of exposure to the viruses that make up the core group may not be very high, but the consequences of the infection could be death or permanent damage. In the case of rabies, there is also a very real risk the horse could transmit the disease to people working with him before anyone realizes the horse has rabies.

Non-core vaccinations. In evaluating whether to **Outbreak.** One area of much confusion is whether horses should be vaccinated if there is a disease outbreak under way. There are many considerations in these situations. Vaccines do not provide immediate protection. If the horse has had the vaccine or the natural disease before, it will take from 1 to 2 weeks for any response to the vaccine to occur. If the horse has not had a vaccine or exposure before, most vaccines require a two-shot series and you won't have full protection for at least 4 weeks. Also very important is whether the horse has already been exposed. If the outbreak has already hit and is running through the barn, there's very little chance the vaccine will be able to work fast enough to protect these exposed horses, and it might even make things worse by adding to the burden on the immune system. If the disease has been located in your vicinity but not actually at your barn, a combination of vaccination and isolating the horses may be the way to go. Infectious disease dynamics can be complicated. Always work out a plan with your veterinarian.

Effective Deworming

The process of deworming your horse involves more than pulling any old dewormer off the feed store shelf. You need to consider your horse's age, the drug being used, the health of your horse, and risk of exposure to parasites.

Most at risk. The very young (under 1 year), the very old, and debilitated horses have lowered resistance to parasites. Because of this, even the most effective dewormers often will not reduce egg counts to zero as they will in healthy adults. These horses are constantly reinfesting themselves and can build up large parasite burdens very easily. In these high-risk groups, if you're not going to do fecal exams to see whether the horse needs deworming, you would be wise to stick very strictly to rotating dewormers.

On the flip side, healthy horses who are not very young or old often have a very vigorous immunity to parasites. The immune system cells lining their intestinal tract can manage to keep parasite infestations very low or even to none at all, especially if they live in uncrowded pasture conditions where they never have to eat close to fecal droppings.

Choosing dewormers. When buying a dewormer drug, train yourself to look at the active ingredients information on the label, rather than the brand name. There are several different brand names for many drugs. If you are trying to rotate dewormers, you need to make sure a different brand name isn't actually the same drug you used last time. Knowing the actual active drug in the dewormer is also essential for knowing what the correct deworming interval is.

Parasite resistance to dewormer drugs is widespread. For small strongyles, resistance has been found to all drugs except ivermectin and moxidectin. If you choose to use one of the drugs with known resistance problems in your program, you should plan to have your veterinarian perform a fecal exam after using that drug at least once a year. If you don't do that, you may be inadvertently increasing the parasite burden in your horses and putting them at risk of building up high parasite levels during some stages of your deworming schedule.

Exposure. Exposure is a big part of risk. Low levels of parasite infestation do not necessarily have any obvious health consequences, but they do keep parasites alive and well in the environment. Because no dewormer gets each and every life stage of parasites, when you deworm your horse you will always be missing some immature worms. These are the ones that eventually mature and begin laying eggs during the deworming interval. The bottom line here is that no horse will ever be 100% parasite free, even if it's the only horse on the property, because he will be a source of parasites himself.

Exposure can come from other horses too, of course. The more horses your horse is turned out with, and the more crowded the living conditions are, the higher the risk is of being exposed to parasites from another horse. Rotating horses through small paddocks or round pens on crowded facilities is also a high-risk situation. If you take your horse away from home for shows or trail rides, always be picky about how you let him graze (if at all) in high traffic areas, and never feed directly on the ground. A few mouthfuls in the

wrong place can result in a heavy parasite infestation.

If you are like most people and have a horse who is heavily infested with parasites, or always has a negative reaction to dewormers, the thought of deworming him probably fills you with fear. This is truly a situation in which you are "between a rock and a hard place." However, the answer is definitely not to avoid deworming. Letting the parasites continue to drain the horse's energy, nutrients, and health and damage his intestinal tract only further weakens him-including his immune system.

Deworming the heavily infested horse. First, involve your veterinarian. There are a variety of strategies for making the process easier on the horse. Anti-inflammatory drugs-such as flunixin meglumine (Banamine?)-can help control systemic reactions like fever or laminitis. Some veterinarians also use antihistamines. For the actual deworming, using a schedule that first deworms with a product that primarily targets only adults, like pyrantel or regular-dose fenbendazole, is a common strategy. Other veterinarians prefer to use ivermectin or moxidectin but at a lower-than-usual dose. After these less-aggressive approaches have reduced the parasite burden, your veterinarian will recommend a regular deworming appropriate to your situation.

*Source: [Equisearch](#), Updated on Mar 20, 2017;
Submitted by Ashley Hotop, DVM at Animal Medical Center*

