

EQUINE LINE



Volume 6, Issue 1 Winter 2012

Regional Horseman's Day: March 16, 2012

Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County will host its 2012 Regional Horseman's Day on March 16, 2012 from 8:15 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. This first annual event will be held at the Goshen Harness Racing Museum in Goshen, NY.

The Regional Horseman's Day is an opportunity to unite equine professionals, farm owners and stable managers, and University Educators from around the Northeast for the purpose of presenting the most up-to-date research initiatives and work in advancing horse industry issues and challenges.

Topics of the day include Nutrition, Youth/Education, Research, and Farm Safety. The event will start with registration and time to meet local Equi-businesses vendors. The Goshen Harness Racing Museum will be open for participants to stroll through; the neighboring Historic Track will also be bustling with trainers throughout the morning; and of course, a great selection of presenters for our Region's Horse Professionals!"

For vendor space or to sponsor a topic please call (845) 344-1234 and ask for Audrey.

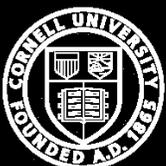
\$40/person admission fee includes all presentations, admittance to the Harness Racing Museum, Continental Breakfast, Lunch and Break Refreshments.
Save \$10! Purchase your ticket by February 15, 2012 for only \$30/person!

See registration form on next page, or contact Cathy at 845-344-1234 or cah94@cornell.edu



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Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Orange County

Agriculture
Family & Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development

18 Seward Avenue, Suite 300
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845-344-1234
Mon.-Fri., 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM
www.cce.cornell.edu/orange

Regional Horseman's Day

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Sorry, no refunds. If you can not attend, please send someone in your place.

Return form and fee to: Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County
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Attn: Regional Horseman's Day

Please reserve a seat for ____ people.

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Regional Horseman's Day

March 16, 2012

A full day of presentations, resources and equi-business vendors for the equine professional and discerning horse owner.

8:15 AM - 3:30 PM

Goshen Harness Racing Museum, 240 Main St., Goshen, NY

8:15 - 8:45

Registration

Coffee, Juice, Fruit, & Muffins Available

8:45 - 9:00

Welcome

Audrey Reith, Equine/Livestock Educator,
Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County

9:00 - 9:45

The Horse is a Magnet for Children

Jean Griffiths, Extension Horse Specialist
Cornell University

9:45 - 10:30

The Genomics of Laminitis: Next-generation Tools to Benefit Horse Health

Dr. Samantha A. Brooks, Assistant Professor
Department of Animal Science, Cornell University

10:30 - 10:45

Break

10:45 - 11:30

Genetic Studies of Gait: Why do horses pace?

Ann Staiger, Graduate Student
Department of Animal Science, Cornell University

11:30 - 12:30

Lunch

12:30 - 1:15

Feeding the Performance Horse

Dr. Ann Swinker, Assoc. Prof. in Equine Sciences, Horse Extension Specialist
Penn State University

1:15 - 2:30

Choosing the Right Hay for Your Horse

Donna L. Foulk, Extension Educator - Equine, Forages, and 4-H.
Penn State Cooperative Extension,
Northampton County

2:30 - 3:15

Reducing the Risks: Horse Farm Safety

Elizabeth (Betsy) Greene, Ph.D.,
Professor/Extension Equine Specialist
University of Vermont



Health Care for Horses

Resource: extension.org/horses
By Crystal Smith, Animal Science Extension Agent,
Virginia Cooperative Extension Service

A solid health-care program will help keep your horse free of disease and allow it to live a happier, longer life. This article will provide a brief overview of horse health care.

Thoughtful and planned care will allow your horse to live a longer and healthier life. Good equine husbandry is based upon the principle of preventive care -- problem prevention rather than problem treatment. This requires embracing all aspects of horse care that affect its health and well-being. The purpose of this publication is to provide broad overview of health care for horses. More detailed information is available through your local extension agent and/or veterinarian.

Housing

There is a wide range of suitable methods to house horses. The most natural method is to keep horses on pasture. Pasture-based horses tend to have fewer disease and behavioral problems than horses housed in more confining circumstances. As a general rule, a stocking rate of one horse per two acres is recommended to maintain pasture quality. Additional acres may be needed depending on soil quality, topography and other animals present. Higher stocking rates will necessitate elevated levels of pasture management such as mowing, fertilizing and rotating pastures, and may require supplemental feeding. Pasture-kept horses must have access to fresh, clean water at all times and adequate shelter during weather extremes. Shelter may be natural, such as mature tree stands, or constructed open sheds. Constructed sheds must have 100 to 150 square feet per horse that will use the shelter. Constructed sheds should be positioned to optimize drainage and should face away from prevailing winds. The shed should be structurally sound, well ventilated and have safe interior and exterior surfaces. It is generally recommended that sheds be set back at least 50 feet from property lines and 100 feet from neighboring houses. Check with local authorities for specific requirements and zoning regulations. Pasture fencing should be durable and safe. Wood or diamond mesh make excellent perimeter fencing choices for horses. Electric tape is a good choice for fortifying existing fencing or for subdividing a pasture for grazing management. The best fencing material will not only depend on cost, but also the age and temperament of the horses to be contained. Gates should latch securely and not have openings in which the horse could get a head or limb caught.

Other suitable methods for housing horses include dry lots and stables. Dry lots have little or no vegetation and are usually used when suitable pasture is not available or as part of a rotational grazing program in order to limit damage to wet or overgrazed pasture. Fresh, clean water, appropriate fencing and adequate shelter must be provided. Dry lots should be well-drained so that horses are not standing in mud. They are frequently constructed with a stone base and are covered with natural clay or crushed stone but may also use geotextile or filter fabric. Measures need to be in place to control erosion of stone, soil and manure into areas that will impact water quality. Manure should be removed regularly. Your local soil and water conservation district will have advice for preventing run-off and protecting water quality.

Management factors such as limited pasture, weather, injury, and the use of the horse may dictate that a horse is stabled for a significant portion of the day. Horse barns should be constructed with health and safety issues in mind. Barns should be located

close to turnout areas and easily accessible for trailers and maintenance equipment. Site selection should optimize drainage, ventilation and light. Construction materials should be sturdy and have safe exterior and interior surfaces, including accessory equipment such as hooks, hangers, latches, feeders and waterers. The standard size horse stall is 12-feet-by-12-feet. This size allows enough room for safe movement of the horse and handler in the stall and for the horse to lie down and get up comfortably. Stall walls and doors should be strong and not have gaps that a hoof could get through. Since exercise is important to the physical and mental well-being of the horse, horses that are kept primarily in stalls should be afforded the opportunity to exercise each day. This might include limited turnout to the pasture or dry lot, work in hand, riding or driving.

Feeding

Proper feeding is critical to the overall health of the horse. Improper feeding can cause problems such as colic, lameness, reduced performance and increased susceptibility to infectious diseases. Aside from water, horses need energy, protein, minerals and vitamins in their rations. Proper amounts and balances of these nutrients are important. Nutrient deficiencies, excesses and imbalances all can have a negative effect on health and performance.

When considering what, how, and how much to feed horses, it is important to remember that horses evolved as forage eaters, grazing for upwards of 16 to 18 hours each day and traveling considerable distances as they grazed. Their stomachs are small, with a 2- to 5-gallon capacity, limiting the amount of feed they can take in at one time. Their digestive system is best suited to processing small amounts of food continuously; therefore, horses are most content when they can nibble almost constantly.

With this information in mind, the most natural food for horses is pasture. Most mature pleasure horses doing light to moderate work will do well on pasture alone if they have sufficient grazing time and good quality forage in the pasture. If pasture or sufficient pasture is not available, feeding hay is next best alternative. If fed hay only, most horses will generally require a minimum of 1.5 to 2 pounds of good quality grass hay, such as timothy, orchard grass or fescue, per 100 pounds of body weight daily to meet their needs. This should be split into two to four feedings. "Easy Keepers" or horses that become over-conditioned, or overweight, on this feeding regimen need fewer calories. In this case, feeding a more mature hay with less nutritional value per pound may allow the horse to eat over a longer period of time without becoming over-conditioned. If hay is being used to supplement pasture, then the amount of hay fed will need to be adjusted in order to keep the horse in appropriate body condition. A horse is considered to be in good body condition when its ribs cannot be seen but can be easily felt. An accurate estimate of a horse's weight can be determined with an equine height tape, which are available at most feed stores. Accurate weights of hay can be measured using economical hanging or top loading scales. Good quality hay is green, leafy and free of mold, excessive dust and musty smell.

Horses on forage diets of grass, hay or a grass/hay combination need salt to balance their diets. Depending on the forage fed and the age and performance of the horse, it may also require a vitamin-mineral supplement, and/or protein supplement. Most feed manufacturers now sell vitamin-mineral-protein supplements designed for horses on forage-based diets. These are low calorie and typically fed at 1 to 2 pounds per day for a mature horse.

Because of limitations on intake capacity, forage alone may



not meet the nutrient requirements of hard working horses, pregnant mares, nursing mares and growing foals. In these instances, horses should be fed a grain/concentrate to supplement their diets. Appropriate types and amounts of grain/concentrate should be fed based on manufacturer recommendations, and these recommendations should be adjusted based on the body condition and exercise level of the individual horse. Any change in the diet should be done slowly. Forage should still be fed at a minimum of 1 to 1.5 pounds per 100 pounds of body weight daily to keep the digestive tract functioning normally.

Contagious Disease Control

Contagious diseases are those that can be spread from one animal to another. Control programs should be targeted at reducing exposure to disease-causing agents and increasing disease resistance. To reduce contagious disease exposure to resident horses, it should be required that new horses have a negative test for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA, Coggins Test) and have been appropriately vaccinated and dewormed before they arrive. New horses should be received and maintained in an isolation barn or paddock for 30 days to ensure that sick horses or horses incubating a contagious disease are not inadvertently introduced into the farm population. The isolation area should be physically separated from the resident horses. Separate equipment and preferably separate personnel should be used to take care of the isolated horses. Isolated horses should be cared for after the resident horses. During the 30-day quarantine period, horses should be monitored daily for signs of contagious disease. Common signs to look for are decreased appetite or activity level, coughing, fever and discharge from the nose or eyes.

Additionally, any resident horse that becomes ill with a potentially contagious disease should also be promptly isolated. Isolation should continue for at least 10 days after all symptoms are gone. Separate equipment and personnel should be used to take care of sick horses. If separate personnel are not available, sick horses should be tended to after other horses on the farm. Stalls that have housed sick horses should be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected and left empty for as long as possible before being used by other horses.

Disease resistance in horses can be enhanced by proper housing, feeding, exercise and the use of vaccines. Vaccines are health products that trigger positive immune responses and prepare the vaccinated individual to fight future infections from disease-causing agents. There are many vaccines and vaccine combinations available for use in horses. The specific vaccines needed by a particular horse will depend on several factors, including the horse's age, exposure to other horses and geographic location. Your veterinarian will help you determine the vaccination program best suited to your horse.

In general, all adult horses should be vaccinated against tetanus, Eastern and Western encephalomyelitis (EEE and WEE), West Nile Virus (WNV) and rabies each year. Horses that are exposed to other horses during shows, trail rides and other events should also be vaccinated for influenza and equine herpes virus 1 and 4 (EHV-1 and EHV-4). Booster vaccines may need to be given every three to six months for effective immunity. Pregnant mares should be vaccinated against EHV-1 the fifth, seventh and ninth months of gestation. Pregnant mares should also be boosted for tetanus, EEE, WEE, WNV, EHV-1, EHV-4 and influenza four to six weeks before foaling. Only "killed" vaccines may be used in pregnant mares. Foals from appropriately vaccinated mares usually start their vaccinations when they are 3 to 4 months old.

Foals from unvaccinated mares need tetanus antitoxin right after birth and should start their vaccines at 2 to 3 months of age. Many other vaccines are available and may be recommended in your area. Again, work with your veterinarian to set up a vaccine protocol specific to your horse's individual needs.

Parasite Control

Controlling internal parasites, or worms, is an extremely important component of horse health care. Internal parasites are silent thieves and killers. The damage they cause often goes unnoticed until problems are severe. The most common and troublesome internal parasites in horses are roundworms, small and large strongyles, tapeworms and botfly larvae. Young horses are more likely to be adversely affected than adult horses. All internal parasites have similar life cycles: Parasite eggs are passed in feces of infected horses; horses ingest parasite eggs or larvae from the environment; parasite larvae migrate through various tissues of the horse specific for each parasite and usually end up in the gastrointestinal tract, where they mature into adults. Migrating larvae can cause tissue damage to the lungs, intestinal wall and blood vessels. The physical presence of the adult worm can cause intestinal irritation and intestinal obstruction and will take valuable nutrients away from the horse.

Unfortunately, there is no single parasite control program that suits all horses and all situations. You should consult your veterinarian to help devise a parasite control program for your horse or your farm. In general, parasite control programs should include appropriate selection and use of anthelmintics, or dewormers, management practices that further reduce parasite transmission and evaluation of the control program. The dewormer used must be highly effective against the parasite infesting your horse. Your veterinarian can help you determine which dewormer is appropriate for which horses. The correct amount of dewormer must be administered based on an accurate estimation of your horse's weight; using a weight tape is strongly recommended. Routine removal of feces from stalls, pastures and paddocks will decrease the number of parasite eggs/larvae in the environment. Manure should not be spread on pastures unless it has been properly composted for the appropriate amount of time. True composting will kill internal parasite larva in approximately three months, while piling manure and letting it sit will take a year. The effectiveness of parasite control program should be evaluated once or twice yearly by having fecal examinations performed.

Dental Care

Proper dental care is essential to maintaining a healthy horse and regular dental checkups should be included in every horse's health care program. Horses with healthy teeth will be more comfortable, utilize feed more efficiently, may perform better and will likely keep their teeth longer. Common dental problems in horses include the following: sharp enamel points which cause lacerations of the checks and tongue; retained deciduous teeth, or baby teeth and "caps"; malocclusions, the improper alignment of the upper and lower teeth, which lead to uneven wear and overgrowth of teeth; fractured teeth; loose or missing teeth, and infected teeth and/or gums. Regrettably, many horses do not show signs of dental problems until it is too late to correct them. Regular dental care can prevent many problems from occurring and allows correction of minor problems before they become severe. Dental care should begin with foals. Foals should be examined shortly after birth and again around weaning for congenital birth defects. If congenital defects are recognized early, surgical or orthodontic correction may be possible. Dental exams should then be per-



formed once or twice a year, depending on the age and use of the horse. Younger horses, performance horses and geriatric horses will likely benefit from more frequent exams. Your veterinarian will help you set up an appropriate dental care plan.

Hoof Care

The time-honored phrase "No Foot - No Horse" emphasizes the importance of healthy feet to the well-being of a horse. Proper hoof care will help reduce lameness problems and allow a horse to perform up to its potential. Good hoof care involves maintaining facilities free of sharp objects that may injure a hoof, feeding a balanced diet that optimizes hoof growth and integrity, regular hoof inspection and farrier care. A horse's feet should be handled regularly from birth. This allows it to get accustomed to having its feet worked with, and frequent observation will help caregivers recognize problems early. In general, a horse's hooves will need to be trimmed every six to 12 weeks by a farrier in order to remove excessive growth and to ensure proper balance. The exact interval will depend on how fast the hooves grow, the horse's activity and the terrain to which it is exposed. Overgrown and imbalanced feet will predispose the horse to a variety of problems, including thrush, a bacterial infection of the foot; hoof cracks, and lameness due to abnormal stress on joints and soft tissues. Shoeing horses is not usually necessary unless hoof wear is greater than hoof growth, resulting in lameness.

Summary

Taking care of horses does not need to be complicated. A solid health-care program will help keep your horse free of disease and allow it to live a happier, longer life. Preventing problems makes more sense than treating them. Working with your veterinarian and/or extension agent will help make the most of your horse's health-care program.

Biosecurity: The Key to Keeping Your Horses Healthy

*United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health
Inspection Service: Program Aid No. 1825*

Biosecurity means doing everything you can to reduce the chances of an infectious disease being carried onto your farm by people, animals, equipment, or vehicles, either accidentally or on purpose.

Showing Your Horse

- ◆ Use your own trailer. Don't ship your horses with horses from other farms.
- ◆ Ship only in a trailer that has been cleaned and disinfected. If you can "smell horse" in the empty trailer, it has not been cleaned and disinfected properly.
- ◆ Don't let your horse touch other horses, especially nose to nose.
- ◆ Don't share equipment (e.g., water, feed buckets, brushes, or sponges).
- ◆ Wash your hands, especially after helping other people with their horses.
- ◆ Don't let strangers pet your horse, especially those with hors-

es at home or people who have been out of the country in the past 2 weeks.

- ◆ Before leaving the show grounds, clean and disinfect tack, boots, equipment, and grooming supplies. Brush off dirt or manure; then disinfect (spray or wipes are easy to take with you).
- ◆ When you get home, shower, blow your nose, and put on clean clothes and shoes before going near other horses.

Visiting Other Farms, Horse Shows, or Auctions

- ◆ Have a pair of shoes or boots that you save for visiting and don't wear around your own horse.
- ◆ Wear plastic shoe covers. Plastic bags from newspapers work well.
- ◆ If you are going to be working with horses on another farm, wear coveralls or plan to change clothes before returning to your horse.
- ◆ If there are farms you visit all the time and you can't change clothes and shoes, be sure their vaccination program and biosecurity practices are as good as your own.

For Visitors to Your Farm or Horse

- ◆ It is best to have only one way into your farm. Mark this as the main entrance.
- ◆ Park away from the horses. Doing that will help keep disease-carrying organisms from being tracked from car floors or tires to your horses.
- ◆ If the farrier or veterinarian needs to park closer, be sure their tires and shoes have been disinfected.
- ◆ Ask all visitors to wear clean clothes and shoes. Give visitors plastic shoe covers, or brush dirt off their shoes and spray them with disinfectant.
- ◆ If you have many visitors, such as at a farm tour or open house, make a footbath for them to walk through.

Bringing Horses Back From a Show

- ◆ If one horse has been shown, all your horses need to be vaccinated. Horses that show can bring home germs. Discuss what vaccinations the horses need, and how often, with your veterinarian.
- ◆ If possible, keep horses which were off the farm isolated for at least 2 weeks. Make sure there is no nose-to-nose contact.

Bringing in New Horses

This is the most likely way for infectious diseases to come in.

- ◆ **Keep every new horse isolated for 30 days.** Don't use pitchforks, grooming tools, or feed and water buckets on any horse but the new one. Mark these with red tape, or use red brushes, etc., only for the isolation area.
- ◆ **Work with the isolated horse last each day.** Alternatively, wear boots and coveralls when working with the isolated horse and remove them before working or going near other horses. You can keep these in a plastic-covered tub near the horse.
- ◆ **Always wash your hands and blow your nose after working with the new horse.** You could carry germs to your other horses in your nose.



Using Disinfectants

How To Disinfect

Surfaces must be clean for disinfectants to work. Brush off loose dirt and manure. If possible, wash the item with detergent first (laundry or dish soap works well) and then use a disinfectant. Most grooming tools can be dipped in disinfectant. Tack can be wiped with a disinfectant wipe or a disinfectant-dampened cloth. Shoes can be brushed or scrubbed off and then sprayed with disinfectant.

Examples of Disinfectants

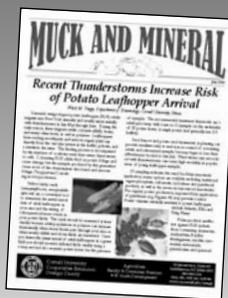
Household Bleach – Mix $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of bleach per gallon of water. If you don't have a measuring cup handy, you can mix 1 part bleach to 10 parts water. This formula works for shoes, grooming equipment, buckets, shovels, and pitchforks. When you use bleach, make sure all dirt and manure have been cleaned off first.

Spray Disinfectant – Be sure the label says it kills bacteria and viruses. Sprays can work well on shoes, grooming equipment, and tack. Try to remove all manure and dirt before spraying.

Waterless Hand Sanitizers – They come in gels or hand wipes. These are good for use at a show or after visiting other horses. Be sure to work the cleaner all through your fingers and under the nails.

Other Disinfectants – Always mix and use according to the label. Two examples are One Stroke Environ[®] (available from Steris Corporation) and Tek-trol[®] (from Bio-Tek Industries). These both work well even if there is a little manure or dirt left on the surface. These are good choices for disinfecting trailers and car tires, and they also work well in footbaths.

Note: Trade names used in this publication do not constitute an endorsement, guarantee, or warranty of these products. USDA bears no responsibility resulting from the use of the described products. These procedures are not guaranteed to prevent highly contagious diseases from affecting your horses; however, they will reduce the risks.



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Other Agricultural Newsletters of Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County

Muck and Mineral - Current and local information on commercial vegetable crop management and marketing topics including meeting announcements.

Hudson Valley Horticulture - A regional monthly newsletter providing current information on landscape horticulture, pest control, and business management for landscape and nursery professionals, garden centers, and lawn care services.

Hudson Valley Equine Line - Provides timely, comprehensive information on farm business management, pasture management, and animal husbandry for both professional and recreational horse owners.

Hudson Valley Tree Fruit News - A newsletter with daily email updates or call-in phone recordings with the latest information for the commercial tree fruit grower during the growing season.

New York Berry News - This monthly printed newsletter, straight from Cornell University, is packed with up-to-date information for commercial tree fruit and berry growers.

Hudson Valley Grape Newsletter - A quarterly newsletter for the commercial wine and table grape grower, with a bi-weekly list serve update for email recipients.

Gardening in Orange County - Home gardening information written by Orange County Master Gardener volunteers. (Printed version may be ordered without the enrollment fee or *Ag Focus* subscription for just \$15.00.)



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To help us get you the information, updates and notices that you need, please check ALL categories that apply to your farm or business.

HORTICULTURE

 Vegetables

 Herbs

 Greenhouse: Vegetables

 Greenhouse: Herbs

 Greenhouse: Ornamentals

 Tree Fruit

 Small Fruit/Berries

 Grapes

 Annual Flowers

 Perennial Flowers

 Trees & Shrubs

 Cut Flowers

 Christmas Trees

 Golf Course

 Sod

 Athletic fields

 Field Crops

 Pastures

LIVESTOCK

 Dairy Cows

 Replacement Heifers

 Beef

 Swine

 Sheep

 Dairy Goats

 Meat Goats

 Chickens

 Ducks

 Llamas

HORSES

 Recreational

 Draft

Commercial Services:

 Boarding

 Training

 Breeding

CERTIFICATIONS

 Nursery

 Greenhouse

 Plant Dealer

 Landscape Architect

 Certified Crop Advisor

 NYS DEC Pesticide Applicator (list categories)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES YOU PROVIDE

 Feed/Seed

 Fertilizers/Chemicals

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 Compost/Waste Rendering

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 Dairy

 Small Livestock

 Backyard Pets

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 Insurance

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 Farrier

 Tack/Clothing

 Dealer/Appraiser

MISC. PRODUCTS YOU SELL

 Hay/Straw

 Compost

 Mulch

 Meat

 Eggs

 Maple Products

 Honey

 Breads

 Preserves

FARM SALES

 Retail

 Wholesale

 CSA

 On-Farm Stand/Store

 U-pick

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 Mineral Soil

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EQUINE LINE



Equine Line is a bi-monthly publication designed to provide the horse owner/enthusiast with timely, relevant information pertaining to the various segments of the equine industry in the upper Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountain areas of upstate New York. Contact your local Cooperative Extension office for subscription information.

This issue was prepared by Audrey Reith, CCE Orange and Ulster Counties.

Audrey Reith
CCE Orange & Ulster Counties
845-344-1234
845-389-3564 (cell phone)
ald55@cornell.edu