

Missouri Horse Council Newsletter – Spring 2020



Copyright all rights reserved.

Executive Committee

Chair: Sherry Copeland - Marshfield
Vice Chair: Lynn M Martin - Centralia
Secretary: Cindy K Roberts - Chesterfield
Treasurer: Melody Canote - Hallsville
Director - Stacie Smith - Pilot Grove
Director - Debbie Birk - Cape Girardeau
Director - Becki Krueger - Kahoka
Past Chair: Joe Eddy - Rocheport
Advisor - Kelly Smith

www.missourihorsecouncil.com

email: info@missourihorsecouncil.org

Message from the Executive Committee

Meet your 2020 Executive Committee! We are dedicated to our cause and look forward to serving the equine industry in Missouri. Our team participation is through email, conference calls and in-house meetings. We are forming committees and encourage your involvement. If you and your horse are wanting to sign up on a committee, giddy up to our website – www.missourihorsecouncil.com and remember, your horse is counting on you!



Spring Check List for Horse Owners

- Schedule spring vet appointments to ensure your horse is in excellent health. Make sure your horses are set to be seen for routine vet exams, Coggins tests, vaccines, strategic deworming and dental care.
- Keep on top of farrier work. Winter brings its own hoof-care concerns. Maintaining healthy hooves is important to the horse's well-being and ability to perform.
- Get fly gear ready for spring. Don't wait for pests to be a problem. Gather fly gear and check its fit and condition now so it's ready to use when your horse needs it.
- Clean your tack. We're not talking about a quick once-over, but a good, deep cleaning. Get it gleaming in a way you don't have time for during the busy season. Check for cracking in leather, weak spots and rusty hardware.
- Wash the warm-weather blankets. You know how hard it is to get the blankets washed when they're in daily use, so grab a good book and take a trip to the laundromat for a mass cleaning.
- Keep riding your horse. An elite athlete doesn't stop training during the off-season, and neither should your horse. Riding all winter prevents injury and keeps them physically fit for competition. Even if your horse is on vacation for the winter, they need exercise. Turn-outs may not be big enough; get them out and active.
- Feed mineral salt: stress and dehydration are big winter concerns.
- Work on your horse's body condition score. Now is the time to make tweaks that will improve their score before competition season. Do they need fattening up? Slimming? Work with a vet or equine nutritionist to formulate a plan to take you through the rest of the year.

What's Inside:

- Message from the Executive Committee
- Spring check list for horse owners
- Horse trailer maintenance recommendations
- Trail resources
- Mistakes horse owners make when trailering
- Biosecurity considerations for travel
- Part I of II – Long in the tooth: Horses need routine dental care
- Active membership list

- Do some serious cleaning. If you touch it in the warm months, clean it now and don't overlook things like horse brushes. To clean those, dunk them in a bucket of warm soapy water, add a capful of bleach and let them dry so they'll be ready to care for the spring coat.
- Do trailer maintenance. Clean and perform necessary maintenance on your ride so you're ready to roll when it's time.

Regular maintenance checks should be performed on a horse trailer every time it is used.

Routine Checks Include:

- Tires need a minimum amount of ¼" of tread (check with your state Division of Motor Vehicles for the measurement); they should be adequately inflated and have no signs of dry rot cracks. Spare tires also should be checked.
- Jacks, lug wrenches, and safety triangles or reflectors should be in good working order in case of breakdown. (Ignitable flares should not be stored in the horse trailer because of fire potential.)
- Floorboards should not be rotted or in weak condition. Replace any boards that are questionable. To help lengthen the life of a trailer floor, mats should be lifted after use and the floor swept or hosed out. If the floor is hosed, be sure it is dry before the mats are replaced. Yearly applications of a weather sealer on the floorboards will also extend their life.
- Screws, bolts, or nails that may have worked loose and are protruding from the inside of the trailer should be removed.
- All lights (marker, tail, brake, directional, and interior) should be working and bright.
- Hitch welds, safety chain welds, and snaps should be in good repair.
- Hitch ball should be kept greased as needed.
- Wheel chocks should be in good condition. Use them any time the trailer is unhitched from the towing vehicle.

Yearly Maintenance Checks Include:

- Inspection of frame for cracks and wires for loose connections and frayed covering.
- Repair or replacement of rotted or rusted metal.
- Greasing of all hinges, springs, etc.
- Inspection of ramp hinges and springs for weakness and cracks.
- Wheels should be pulled, and bearings checked and repacked.
- Inspection of spring shackles for wear.
- Inspection of brakes and emergency break-away cable, pin and control box.

Before you ride, check for possible trail closures through these websites.



Trail Link website www.traillink.com

Missouri Park Trails information: <https://mostateparks.com/activity/horseback-riding>

<http://www.equitrailapp.com/> Now on sale for \$4.99 – a great tool to have to navigate and chart your rides. Get real-time access to trail maps that you can bring anywhere you and your horse go. Explore local trails and use EQUiTrail to follow your tracks back home and share your favorite trails with other riders.



Mistakes Horse Owners Make When Trailering

- Hay nets are improperly installed. Hay nets hanging too low can cause a horse to get hung up in the hay net causing a leg injury or perhaps strangulation.
- Failing to maintain the horse trailer.
- Not inspecting horse compartments for stinging insects.
- Not applying proper leg protection. When applying standing bandages know the proper way to wrap; too tight and you can cut off the circulation; too loose and the horse is stepping on himself. Go to this link to learn more about how to apply a standing bandage. <https://practicalhorsemanmag.com>. Shipping boots are the simplest leg wraps to apply and don't take much time to apply.
- Not taking time to get your horse acclimated to trailer travel. Here is an excellent article on working with your horse to load – go to this link: <https://www.horsejournals.com/riding-training/general/horse-behaviour-psychology/how-load-horse-trailer>
- Hauling aggressive horses next to a timid horse.
- Driving too fast.
- Using incorrect towing vehicle or hitch. It is critical that you use the right vehicle designed to tow your trailer. Never overload the trailer. This is an accident waiting to happen! For proper towing information click here: <https://equusmagazine.com/horse-care/youre-shopping-towing-vehicle-14716>



Remember!!!

If loading a sweaty horse into a trailer after a long ride, use coolers - wool or fleece - to help him dry and keep him warmer as his muscles cool off. A cooler on a clipped horse will help keep him warm as he acclimates to the “room temperature” and a cooler on an unclipped horse will help him dry, although remember that the sweat starts at the skin and moves outward, so this drying time will be crazy long. At some point, you should be able to remove a cooler on a fuzzy horse and let him dry.

Biosecurity considerations for travel

Equine Disease Communication Center (EDCC) <http://www.equinediseasecc.org/> | Reprinted with permission

For Horse Owners

Travelling with horses presents several risks associated with the spread of disease; to maintain the health of you horse and prevent potential outbreaks, keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. **Horses should be healthy before leaving the property.** Do not travel with a horse that is already showing clinical signs of illness. Travel further stresses a horse's system, can result in more severe illness, and moving sick or exposed horses can spread disease to others. To maintain your horse's health keep them on a vaccination plan, a deworming schedule, a diet appropriate for your horse's workload, and an adequate exercise program.
2. **Your horse's mode of transportation can pose a risk.** Trailers make excellent fomites (a fomite is an object or material likely to harbor infection). Clean your trailer between every trip, limit your horse's ability to touch other horses in the trailer, and disinfect all surfaces regularly.
3. **Different regions pose different risks of infection.** If you are travelling long distance, your destination may pose a risk to your horse's health. Risk Based Vaccines are administered to horses in regions where a disease is considered endemic. Some vaccines are given multiple times over the course of a year in regions where insect vectors are active year-round.

4. **Consider your destination.** Are you travelling to a facility for an event and, if so, does that facility have biosecurity in mind? Are you travelling to a trail ride, or outdoor event where contact with other horses and/or shared water sources might pose a risk?
5. **Keep separate equipment for your horse/trailer.** Keep your own pitchforks, muck buckets, hoses, water buckets, feed pans/buckets, grooming supplies, and tack separate from others. Do not share equipment between horses and clean and disinfect your equipment regularly.

Other Resources

[Travelling Horse Checklist, Equine Guelph](#)

[Biosecurity for the Travelling Show Horse, Rood & Riddle](#)

[Keeping Horses Healthy and Sound During Transport \(podcast\), The Horse \(timestamps 1:30 to 8:15, 20:00 to 20:58\)](#)

Biosecurity for Equine Transporters

1. **Ensure the health of every horse you transport.**
 - a. Require a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) or health certificate as well as a negative Coggins test for every horse from every client. Keep up-to-date on state requirements for entry and check for outbreaks at or near the destination before transporting. **Never ship horses to or from a quarantined facility without the supervision of an attending veterinarian.**
 - b. **Check temperatures and observe for clinical signs of illness before traveling-** Horses should be monitored for signs of illness before traveling. Horses with a temperature of 102°F (38.8° C) or obvious clinical signs should not be transported unless under the approval of a veterinarian.
 - c. **If you must ship a horse to or from veterinary facilities, always do so under the guidance of the attending veterinarian.**
2. **Clean and disinfect-** The entire vehicle between trips with a different horse or group of horses. Remove manure and soiled bedding after every trip and, if possible, during trips.
 - a. **Disinfection protocol**
 - i. **Remove all organic matter- *Surfaces cannot be disinfected if organic matter is present.*** Scrub surfaces with warm, soapy water to remove all traces of organic matter including dirt, feces, saliva and mucous.
 - ii. **Allow surface to dry** before applying a disinfectant.
 - iii. **Disinfect-** After scrubbing the surface, use an approved disinfectant such as bleach (recommended at a strength of 1-part bleach to 10 parts water), accelerated hydrogen peroxide or a phenolic. Be sure to follow label directions for use including precautions that workers should be taking in applying the product used.
 - iv. **Allow surface to dry** before using the vehicle.
 - v. **Remember to disinfect crossies and under floor mats as well-** floor mats should be pulled up, scrubbed, and sprayed with a disinfectant, as should the floor beneath them. Crossies should be cleaned of organic matter and disinfected.
3. **Limit stress-** Stress can have a negative impact on the equine immune system making horses more prone to illness. Limiting stress as much as possible is the best way to keep horses healthy. "Stress occurs when a horse is

required to make abnormal or extreme adjustments in its behavior or internal management (physiology) in order to cope with adverse aspects of its environment and management.” ([UC Davis](#))

- a. **Limit duration-** Time spent on the trailer should never exceed 12 hours. Horses should be unloaded and placed in a well-ventilated stall or paddock for 8 hours during long periods of travel to allow for rehydration and to clear the lungs.
 - b. **Maintain hydration-** Offer clean water every 3 to 6 hours during prolonged ground or air transportation. Do not share water buckets between horses unless they are cleaned and disinfected between uses.
 - c. **Allow horses to drop their heads, if possible-** Horses should be allowed to drop their heads and stretch out their necks if it is safe to do so. Restricting head posture inhibits the horse’s ability to clear the trachea and lungs and can lead to shipping fever (pneumonia).
 - d. **Allow horses to choose their orientation, if possible-** Many horses will choose to travel facing opposite the direction of travel.
 - e. **Ensure adequate ventilation** to improve air quality.
 - f. **Monitor horses for signs of injury, illness, and/or stress-** Horses showing signs of injury, illness, or stress should be removed from the vehicle and assessed by a veterinarian before continuing their journey. If you find yourself in need of a vet near-by, the American Association of Equine Practitioners can help you [locate a local practitioner](#).
4. **Don’t share equipment** between horses. Do not allow multiple horses to drink from the same bucket. Use equipment such as halters and lead ropes that are dedicated to that specific horse.
 5. **Keep yourself clean-** Humans are a common fomite. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often. If transporting a sick horse, change clothes and disinfect boots before handling other animals.



Part I of II – Long in the tooth: Horses need routine dental care



Alison LaCarrubba, DVM, DABVP (Equine)

Associate Professor, University of Missouri | Reprinted with permission

For most of us, a visit to the dentist is not our favorite activity. If we could ask our horses, they would probably agree. But oral cavity health is critical to the health of the entire horse.

Most healthy adult horses do well with basic dental care; however, there are many horses who have significant and undiagnosed dental disease that affects their overall health and wellbeing. As horses live longer lives, this becomes even more important. Horses can be very stoic and can have longstanding and significant dental issues that result in infections, abnormal wear of teeth, and even premature tooth loss, without showing obvious signs of pain. Typically after dental disease is diagnosed and treated, owners notice a difference in eating behavior, temperament, and performance.

Horses were designed to eat forage continuously throughout the day and night, with their head down, rather than consuming fewer, large meals from a raised bucket. The types of feed a horse eats, along with grazing time and feeding conditions, influence the overall health of the horse’s mouth. By changing the types and quantity of feed a horse eats, from mostly forage to mostly concentrate, we change how they chew and the amount they salivate. These changes can result in pathology and painful disease if left unchecked.

Horses chew from side to side and grind their feed with the rough surfaces of their teeth. As they chew, they sharpen the enamel layer near the cheeks on the upper arcades and near the tongue on the lower arcades. The most common signs horses show when they have sharp enamel points are dropping feed and abnormalities of chewing, either more slowly than

usual or with their head to the side. Some horses also drool when they have sharp points and some horses may even lose weight, especially older horses. It is important to have a veterinarian perform a dental examination every six to twelve months on all horses to ensure that they do not have sharp enamel points or other more significant oral cavity problems.

Historically, equine dentistry was mostly limited to dental floating, or rasping of the sharp enamel points. However, over the years, we have learned that it is important to address not just the sharp points, but to ensure overall proper function of the teeth and soft tissues of the oral cavity. Today, we focus on balancing the mouth and reducing abnormal forces on the teeth due to abnormal wear.

In the next newsletter, look for Part II that provides details about specific equine dental problems.

Remember that according to Missouri state law, equine dentistry is the practice of veterinary medicine. Therefore, dentistry can only be legally performed in Missouri by a duly licensed veterinarian or by an employee under the direct supervision of the veterinarian. This law supports and promotes the health and welfare of the equid.



We're growing stronger! Our proud members:

American Saddlebred Versatility Association

Back Country Horseman of Missouri

Brokegirls Equine Event Management

Clark County Mule Festival

Cross Country Trail Ride, LLC

Every Cowgirl's Dream, LLC

Gateway Harness Club

Hands That Help

Jackson County Mounted Posse

Lark Plantation, LLC

MFA, Inc.

MidWest MuleFest

Missouri Quarter Horse Association

Missouri Farm Bureau

Mules & More Magazine

Panther Creek Trail Rides

Rolling Thunder Ranch

Sassy Ass Crafts

United Mosquito and Fly Control

University of Missouri College Veterinary Medicine

Von Holten Ranch, LLC

Western Mule Magazine

Happy Trails

