



U of M Horse Newsletter

Providing research-based information to Minnesota Horse Owners

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Harvesting Ditch Hay By: Krishona Martinson, PhD, U of M

Harvesting ditch hay (grass and legumes growing alongside the roadway) is a common practice. Ditch hay provides several livestock owners with suitable forage for horses, beef cattle and dairy heifers. However, in recent years, there have been several cases of significant soybean injury as a result of manure applications from livestock fed ditch hay that had been treated with picloram or clopyralid. Picloram (commonly sold as Tordon and Grazon) and clopyralid (commonly sold as Stinger, Curtail and Transline) are used to control unwanted broadleaf weeds and noxious weeds along roadways. When animals are fed ditch hay that has been treated with either picloram or clopyralid, it passes through the animal ending up in the manure. Manure application to agriculture production fields is a beneficial and common practice. However, if sensitive crops (soybeans, lentils, peas, legumes, potatoes, tomatoes or peppers) are planted in fields, or compost is used in gardens, where contaminated manure has been applied, injury or crop death can occur. Both picloram and clopyralid carry important precautions that ditch hay harvesters and feeders need to be aware of: 1. manure and urine containing these herbicides may cause injury to sensitive broadleaf plants

and 2. plant material containing these products should not be used in compost. 3. do not harvest or cut the forage within 30 days after application. Composting or storing manure that contains clopyralid and picloram may not speed-up the degradation of the herbicides as these products do not break down quickly in compost. Currently, it is believed that clopyralid can remain in manure, forage/feedstuffs or compost for several years. Because of this, composting contaminated manure is not a solution for this problem. However, you can spread contaminated manure/compost on fields that will be planted into grass crops (i.e. corn or small grains). Better awareness and communication is needed between local and state highway departments and farmers harvesting, feeding and selling ditch hay. If you do unknowingly or accidentally spread manure containing clopyralid or picloram on agricultural fields, you do have an option to grow only non-susceptible crops (grass crops like corn, small grains or sorghum sudan forage) for 18 months. Even though these products cause injury to sensitive crops, there is no documented history of human or livestock toxicity by picloram or clopyralid. Farmers do need a permit to hay highway areas that MN Department of

Transportation (MN DOT) own, however, permits are not needed on roadways where only an easement is owned. The permit is free, and by contacting MN DOT and obtaining the permit, the farmer will be notified of any cutting restrictions that are due to herbicide use, wildlife habitat designation and/or calendar date restrictions. For contact information regarding the permit, please visit: www.dot.state.mn.us/tecsup/utility/files/permits_contacts.pdf. Roadways owned by county and local governments have their own regulations, and farmers should contact the County or Township to obtain that information prior to harvest. Two labs have developed analysis for clopyralid and picloram. Anatek Labs Inc (208-883-2839) in Idaho and Morse Laboratories Inc (916-481-3141) in California will test forage and soil samples for the presence of clopyralid and will screen for the presence of picloram. If buying ditch hay, buyers should specifically ask if the individual selling/harvesting the hay is aware of any herbicides used. Ditch hay can be a good forage, just make sure the harvest restrictions listed on the herbicide label were followed and the hay is free from garbage and animal carcasses.

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Up Coming Events **HOLD THE DATE!**

Dates and locations for the 2007 Regional Horse Owner Educational Programs have been set:

- February 10th - St. Paul**
- February 17th - Crookston**
- February 24th - Rochester**
- March 10th - Foley**
- March 24th - Cloquet**

On-line registration now available at: www.cvm.umn.edu/outreach

Look for more information in upcoming newsletters or on the website: www.extension.umn.edu/horse

Rotational Grazing Workshop

Greenfield, MN
Tuesday, September 19
6:30 to 9:00 pm
Contact Betsy at 612-596-1175 for more information

Plants Poisonous and Harmful to Horses Poster Available

2' x 3' poster identifying 22 plants. Cost: \$25.00
Contact Kristi for more info at 763-767-3837 or marti987@umn.edu



Ground has been broken! A new tradition of excellence in equine care, research, education and extension is here! The world-class facilities at the Equine Center and the exciting comprehensive equine program represent a new era in which the growing significance of horses is celebrated throughout the entire equine community. This state-of-the art complex will include a conference hall, 100' x 200' indoor arena, modern high-speed treadmill, and custom-designed lameness and reproductive evaluation areas which includes an

Equine Center Update - Ground Breaking!

underwater treadmill. The progressive equine program incorporates the many unique academic resources only available at the University to produce meaningful and innovative advancements in the health, well-being, and performance of the horse. The Equine Center is destined to be a premier facility, providing state-of-the-art diagnostic capabilities, research focused on the causes of performance problems in equine athletes, and in-depth education and extension. The University of

Minnesota is committed to preparing the next generation of equine veterinarians who are well educated with the latest knowledge and technological tools in equine medicine and surgery. Currently, 80% of practicing veterinarians in MN are graduates from the

U of M College of Veterinarian Medicine. The 14 million dollar facility is set to open in August of 2007. To make a donation to the Equine Center, please contact Jeffrey Klausner at 612-624-6244 or Stephanie Pommier at 612-625-8480.



Additional Parasite Control Information

By: Jeremy D. Frederick, DVM, U of M

The recent articles on parasites and control have elicited several additional questions regarding this topic. Below are three of the most frequently asked questions. *How long do these medications last?* The best way to determine how long the medication is working is to have your horse's manure tested for parasite eggs. The specific products give a rough guideline for the estimated length of time the medication is good for. For example: Fenbendazole (Panacur and Safeguard), Mebendazole (Telmin), Oxfenbendazole (Benzelmin), and Oxibendazole (Anthelcide EQ) are usually effective for four weeks. Equisectin, Phoxectrin and Zimectrin are usually effective for four to six weeks. Quest is

usually effective for twelve weeks. Strongid is usually effective for four weeks. Piperazine products are usually effective for four weeks. Products such as Strongid and Anthelban are usually effective for four weeks and products such as Strongid C are usually given as a daily dewormer. Deworming your horse every few months will not be enough in most cases. *Is there anything I can do besides give dewormers?* Dewormers are still necessary, however management is a very essential aspect of a parasite control program and one that is often overlooked. Managing new arrivals, the existing herd, the pastures, and paddocks are all important components. Here are some tips: 1. isolate and treat new

animals on the premises to ensure that highly infected animals do not have a chance to shed parasites into the environment and infect other horses. Alternatively, require that new animals be dewormed prior to joining the stable. 2. monitor young horses closely as they are particularly susceptible to parasitic diseases. 3. watch the stocking density. If your horses primary forage comes from grazing, ensure the animals are not overcrowded or the pasture overgrazed. A good recommendation is each 1,000 pound horse needs two acre of pasture. Rotational grazing will help reduce parasite exposure by spreading out manure, giving the manure time to break down and help reduce over grazing. *How can I tell if my parasite control program is*

working? Monitoring the effectiveness of a parasite preventative program is necessary. You should still test fecal egg counts at least once per year. Testing and monitoring will also help detect unusual parasitic infections. In some situations, certain parasites will not be killed using common strategies and additional medication may be necessary. As a dedicated horse owner or stable/farm manager, along with your veterinarian you can develop a complete and cost effective parasite control program that is best suited for your farm and your animals. The health, happiness and productivity of your horses will make the effort more than worthwhile.