



Modoc Ranch Roundup

C O O P E R A T I V E E X E T E N S I O N

Horse Hints- Colic

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Among the species of domestic livestock, the horse most commonly suffers from colic. Colic is a general term indicating abdominal pain. The anatomy of the horse's digestive tract, its digestive nature and the management practices imposed by man seem to contribute to its occurrence. Therefore horse owners need to know the causes, clinical signs,

diagnostic and treatment procedures and preventive measures to reduce colic's incidence.

Colic has many types and causes. Factors such as sudden changes in the weather, feeding (frequency, quantity or quality of feed), overexertion or chilling may lead to colic. Spasmodic colic is caused by severe contractions of the

intestines. Intestinal obstruction or a twisted intestine create a very severe condition resulting in extreme pain. The

possibility of an obstruction or twisted intestine should be diagnosed as early as possible, because it is potentially life threatening and requires surgery.

A horse with mild colic will paw the ground with its front feet, be restless, lie down and roll frequently and look at its

abdomen. A horse with more severe colic will roll and may become cast and lie on its back to relieve intestinal pressure. Horses with very severe colic will throw themselves to the ground and roll violently. These horses can be dangerous to work with until properly sedated. Pulse and respiratory rates rise

B E E F B I T S – C O L D S T R E S S

Healthy cattle with average body condition and hair coat have a thermoneutral zone, where efficiency and rate of gain are maximal. In this comfort zone, energy requirements for body maintenance are minimal, permitting the maximum amount of energy to be expended for growth and functions other than regulating body temperature. Temperatures below the thermo neutral zone represent cold stress this could range from freezing for an animal with a dry coat to 60 degrees F for an animal with a wet coat.

Cattle exposed to cold require more energy for maintenance, and performance will be reduced if action is not taken to provide for it. Some suggestions for reducing winter stress and maintaining production in cold weather are:

1. Provide wind breaks and shelters to reduce wind moisture and mud.

2. Construct feedlots and buildings on south slopes in areas where average temperatures are higher and moisture conditions are lower.
3. Adjust energy in rations to match expected performance for seasonal conditions.
4. Brief (> 24 hours) wind chill and cold stress will be less severe than 24-hour continuous cold stress. Consider bringing animals in to shelter during prolonged wind and cold.
5. Provide bedding during severe cold weather to permit cattle to lie down without directly contacting the frozen ground.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- December 24th– January 4th: Office Closed
- January 8-9th: Expanding Horizons– California Rangelands Conservation Coalition Summit, Chico, CA
- January 16: Restoration and Conservation Workshop, Boise, ID
- January 17th: Opportunities in a Changing Beef Industry, LaGrande, OR
- January TBD– Modoc County Cattlewomen’s Winter Meeting, in Alturas

Find something interesting?

Contact the Farm Advisor’s office for more information on any of the events shown or for more information on the topics presented.



BEEF BITS – CONT

Cattle will voluntarily seek protection from rain, wind, and mud if it is available to them. If cattle are provided with modest protection, either by natural or man made means, their exposure will be intermittent rather than continuous. The severity of the “effective temperature” can be greatly reduced by intermittent exposure provided by shelter.

California Rangelands Conservation Coalition Summit

Take 5 minutes to register today for the 4th Annual Summit of the California Rangeland Conservation Coalition scheduled for January 8-9, 2009 in Chico, CA. This ever growing event, brings together ranchers, environmentalists, elected officials and natural resource agency staff for an event centered on preserving and enhancing California’s private working rangelands.

Register before December 31 for this educational and inspiration event at <http://store.calcattlemen.org/summit.aspx>

The final agenda, with confirmed speakers, you can find more information online at www.carangeland.org.

Winter Management of Hay Fields– Don Lancaster

Even though the cropping season is over, there are several things growers can do in the wintertime to prepare for next seasons crop.

Rodent Management

Now is the time to get a jump on rodent problems, especially gophers. We have seen a major increase in gopher activity throughout Modoc County this fall. The winter is the time to control as many as possible before your hay crops begin to grow next spring. The two best methods to control gophers in hay fields is trapping and baiting the burrow systems. One grower in Surprise Valley diligently trapped two fields a few years ago, and estimated that he caught 9 to 10 gophers per acre during the winter. The following spring, he had the best hay crop he had ever seen, thanks to the removal of his gopher pests.

Meadow mice can cause significant stand loss under snow cover. Scout your fields and treat any mouse populations you find before the snow flies.

Weed Management

This is a good time to check field edges and irrigation mainlines for problem weeds. Develop a strat

egy to control unwanted weeds to prevent them from invading clean fields and reducing the quality of your hay crop next spring. Once you identify problem weeds, consult with your Pest Control Advisor or Farm Advisor to select the best product and timing to use to control unwanted weeds.

Grazing or Burning Unwanted Crop Aftermath

Many growers graze the aftermath that grows after the last cutting of the season. If you use grazing to utilize aftermath, be sure to remove the livestock before winter rains create a problem with hoof imprints. It is also best to drag each field as soon as you remove the livestock so that the manure becomes a crop nutrient instead of a hay contaminant.

Fertility Management

With the high cost of fertilizers, it is not too soon to begin planning for your crop needs for next season. Work with your fertilizer dealer to develop a plan that will meet your crops' needs and fit your budget. Have your field man take soil samples now so you can detect any nutrient deficiencies and order the appropriate fertilizer for application next spring.



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**C O O P E R A T I V E
E X E T E N S I O N**

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H O R S E H I N T S - C O N T .

while temperature typically remains within a normal range. The absence of abdominal sounds is characteristic of a horse with colic. Get a thorough exam by a veterinarian to determine the colic's severity and treatment as soon as possible after the symptoms start.

Preventing colic involves many parameters. Most important is proper management. Avoiding situations which predispose the horse to colic will undoubtedly reduce the incidence of colic.

Here are some practical steps to reduce chances of colic:

1. Do not overgraze pastures.
2. Provide a clean, adequate and abundant source of fresh water daily.
3. Feed on a regular schedule from day to day.
4. Do not feed moldy or spoiled grain or hay.
5. Provide adequate long stem roughage in the diet.
6. Keep stalls and paddock areas free from foreign objects that the horse might ingest.
7. Put all horses on a regular, properly designed deworming program. This step is imperative.

In general, good, practical horse management along with good common sense can allow the horseman to avoid situations which may predispose horses to colic. If colic symptoms do arise, contact your veterinarian.