



Autumn 2010

ISLE VALLEY EQUINE CLINIC

Feeding and Management for Winter

This is the time of year when many people are in transition between a largely outdoor regime for their horses to an indoor, stabled regime.

It is usually much simpler to look after our horses in the summer when they are out at grass as this most closely mimics their natural environment as wild grazing animals. Shutting them in an enclosed 12ft by 12ft box with short bursts of exercise and high energy food can play havoc with their behaviour and metabolism.



The first thing to remember is that any change of management regime should be gradual, especially with regard to diet. Pay attention to the stabling; many horses are susceptible to dust and spores, developing debilitating lung allergies. The stable should be draught-free but well ventilated and airy. It is better to have too much ventilation; use extra rugs in cold weather. If you think your horse is prone to stable allergies then use a dust-free type bedding and avoid poor quality straw.

Remember that your horse is designed to live on roughage and you should aim to provide the majority of his dietary needs through hay or haylage. Concentrates are really the icing on the cake and you should strive to get the best hay that you can find. Again, if your horse has allergy problems then haylage should be your first choice. If you are going to feed wet hay then it needs to be soaked properly to be wet through, but not so long that all the

soluble nutrients are leached away. It is a good idea to try to turn out your horse for some winter grazing each day. This also provides exercise and clean, fresh air.

There is no 'one size fits all' rule for feeding concentrates: each horse is different with differing workload, behaviour and metabolism. Given that we are trying to provide the majority of nutrients from good quality roughage, one should then aim to feed the minimum concentrate food necessary to support the exercise demands of the horse. In addition the hard

feeds should be divided and spread through the day as far as is possible, rather than in one massive meal. It follows that the exercise regime should be well planned and spread out so that your horse can cope with the peak demands put upon him.

Azoturia is a condition which causes muscle damage in exercising horses due to the rapid breakdown of energy stores within the tissues. Those horses that are prone to azoturia, or tying-up need careful dietary management as well as regular exercise to minimise the risk of an attack.

In order to reduce the amount of carbohydrate stored in the muscle, feeding corn or any starchy food should be avoided. Instead, energy should be provided in the form of oil or fat. The amount of oil fed should be built up over a period of weeks, up to a maximum of 1ml/kg/day.

For further advice on azoturia please contact the clinic on 01460 66099.

Winter MOT for Your Horse!



From 1st November 2010 until 1st March 2011 clients can book an **annual MOT** for their horse for just **£45.00!** It can also be booked on a **Free Visit Day** so you will not incur any visit fee.

The vet will give your horse a full clinical examination including eyes, heart, lungs and limbs and they will examine the horse at walk and trot. They will also give advice on your horse's weight condition, worming, dental and vaccination programme. **PLUS you will also get a FREE faecal worm egg count!** (Please note any treatments required following the MOT will be extra.)

Worming Programme

In the past the recommendation was to worm your horse four times a year. However many horses do not need this level of worming and the latest recommendations from the British Equine Veterinary Association is to do **routine faecal egg counts** to assess the worm burden and to determine the appropriate time to administer drugs. This method reduces the frequency and cost of worming and helps reduce the development of resistance in parasites.

Simply collect a 'golfball' size sample of your horse's droppings and either take it or post it to the clinic clearly marked with your horse's name and your surname and address. The results usually take about five days. We can then advise you as to what worming programme your horse requires.

Please note: the faecal egg count does not always detect tapeworms. We recommend treating for tapeworms every spring and autumn. We can do a blood test to check for problems. Simply contact us to arrange a visit.

Stop Press! Outbreak of EIA

Equine Infectious Anaemia (EIA) / Swamp Fever has been detected in a horse in Devon. The premises are currently under restriction and two other horses on the premises are currently being tested. This follows an earlier case in Northumberland but currently there is no link between the two cases. EIA is a virus disease of horses transmitted by the exchange of blood by biting insects and occurs typically in low-lying swampy areas. Symptoms can include fever, lethargy, chronic/rapid weight-loss and loss of appetite. Anyone concerned about their horse should contact the clinic immediately. Tel 01460 66099.

Just a Reminder ...

We do endeavour to send all clients a reminder for when their horse's annual vaccination is due. However this is just an aide memoire - once the card leaves us in the post we cannot guarantee it will reach you. It is, however, ultimately the responsibility of the owner to ensure the vaccination happens within the allocated time.

Client Evening

Emergency First Aid for Horses

From applying a poultice to dealing with an arterial bleed this practical session will cover all aspects of ER for horses. The session will also cover common poisons, demonstrations on bandaging and poulticing, managing colic plus much more. An essential evening for all horse owners!

Venue: Isle Valley Equine Clinic

Time: 7pm

Date: Thursday 18 November

Tickets are FREE, but places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment on **01460 66099.**

ALL WELCOME!

Staff News

On 10 July, one of our equine vets, Susannah Reynoldson, travelled to Ascot with her horse Harry to take part in a sponsored ride for **Help for Heroes.** Susannah would like to thank all her generous sponsors who helped make it such a successful fundraiser. She raised over **£2,000!**

Contact the clinic for more information or look at our website
www.islevalleyvets.co.uk

Equine Clinic: Eleighwater, Chard, TA20 3AF **Tel: 01460 66099**

Small Animal Clinics: Tetts Farm, West Street, Hinton St George, TA17 8SB **Tel: 01460 73398**
St Michael Road, Creech St Michael, TA3 5DP **Tel: 01823 444234**