

Healthy Land Healthy Horses



**An initiative of Horse SA and the Mount Lofty Ranges
Catchment Program, supported by the
Northern, Central and Southern Hills Soil Conservation Boards.**

Developing community partnerships to promote sustainable horsekeeping practices.



(AND REDUCED HORSE HEALTH PROBLEMS)

- **Develop a property plan which reflects your overall vision for the property.**

- **Select an approved horse management system:**

- Low Input (extensive grazing)
- Medium Input (grazing but horses stabled at times)
- High Input (horses stabled and hand fed)

- **Determine an appropriate stocking rate (Dry Sheep Equivalents) for your property.**

- **Follow an effective pasture management program:**

- graze paddocks in rotation (graze at 12 cm, rest at 5 cm)
- soil test to determine lime and fertilizer requirements
- manage lush spring pasture growth by – slashing, hay cutting or grazing with other livestock
- maintain 70% ground cover at all times (minimum height 3 cm).
- seek advice on suitable pasture mixes, management and renovation.

- **Develop an integrated weed control strategy to eradicate toxic weeds (e.g. Salvation Jane) and eliminate problem weeds (e.g. Guildford Grass):**

- maintain soil fertility
- graze paddocks in rotation
- improve pastures
- use selective sprays (if required)
- control weeds entering the property (check hay for weed seeds)
- quarantine new horses for three days to prevent seed spread
- avoid grazing areas bare which encourages Salvation Jane and other weeds.

- **Develop an integrated manure management strategy which may include:**

- collecting and selling compost
- harrowing manure in paddocks
- encouraging dung beetles

Continually evaluate your strategies and update your property plan as required.

Remember

Hand feed hay only on compacted rubble or grassed areas.

Vary feeding spots to reduce overgrazing and muddy areas.

Consider electric fencing to manage waterlogged or muddy areas.

Continuous set grazing small paddocks is a recipe for environmental and equine health problems.

GOOD LAND MANAGEMENT ... HEALTHY HORSES



EYE PROBLEMS

Corneal ulcers result when the cornea is scratched or lacerated.

Symptoms: Squinting, swelling, redness, cloudiness, excessive tears, rubbing of the eye.

What to do: Place the horse in a stable or yard out of direct sunlight and contact your veterinarian.

Land management: Reduce dust and sand by keeping good pasture cover. Manage pastures to reduce weed seeds.



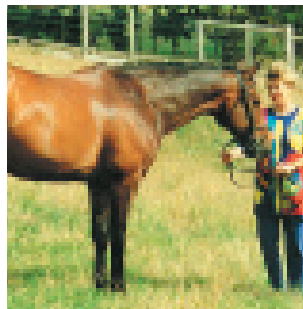
GREASY HEEL • MUD FEVER • THRUSH

Infections of hooves and legs result if animals are kept in mud.

Symptoms: Swelling in the heel, crusty lesions around heel and leg, deep cracks in hoof, foul smelling discharge from 'frog'.

What to do: Remove horse to a dry yard or paddock, contact your veterinarian, treat infection, talk to your farrier about hoof care.

Land management: Keep horses out of waterlogged areas, make use of yards and electric tape, improve pastures, avoid overgrazing.



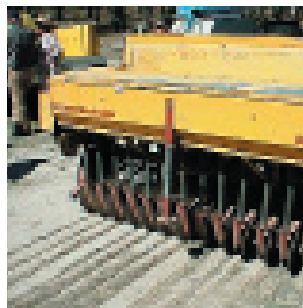
POOR CONDITION

Inadequate feeding and lack of worming may lead to poor condition.

Symptoms: Lack of energy, dull coat and eyes, weakness, poverty marks in hindquarters, visibility of more than two ribs.

What to do: Provide good quality feed and water and follow a regular de-worming program. Seek vet advice if condition does not improve.

Land management: Soil test and add fertiliser and lime if needed, rotationally graze, control weeds and encourage good grasses.



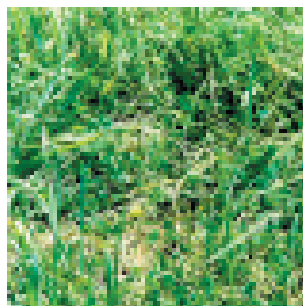
SAND COLIC • SAND INDUCED DIARRHOEA

Horses can ingest sand if kept in bare paddocks or fed on bare areas.

Symptoms: Rolling, excessive laying down, pawing the ground, off feed, not drinking, unusual stance, diarrhoea.

What to do: Call your veterinarian if symptoms appear as death can occur rapidly.

Land management: Do not graze or feed on bare areas, restrict access by using electric tape, avoid overgrazing, re-seed bare paddocks.



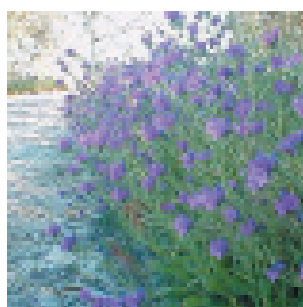
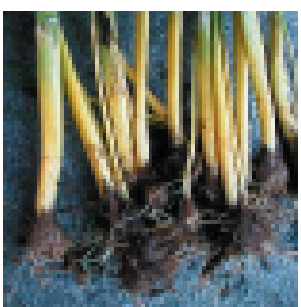
GRASS FOUNDER

Founder is a painful inflammatory disease of the horse's foot.

Symptoms: Resting forefeet, walking tenderly, 'saw-horse' stance, inflammation of hoof, pronounced pulse in digital arteries.

What to do: remove horse to yard or stable, contact your veterinarian, follow the recommended treatment plan.

Land Management: Restrict access to lush pasture, make use of yards and electric tape, seek advice on a suitable pasture mix.



TOXICITY

Numerous plants contain toxins which can poison horses.

Symptoms: Staggering, pronounced salivation, muscular tremors, inco-ordination of movement, convulsive seizures, sudden death.

What to do: Contact your veterinarian, keep animals quiet, remove to clean yard or holding paddock, identify likely problem plants.

Land management: Follow an integrated weed control strategy, graze a mixture of pasture species, seek professional advice.

DEVELOPING A PROPERTY PLAN

- Record your personal and farm visions for the property, taking into account both short and long term goals. The personal vision should include the lifestyle you want and how much time and money you have to put into the property. The farm vision should include the type and number of horses, the management system to be used and permanent structures required.
- Purchase an aerial photograph or draw an outline map of your property.
- On a clear overlay, map the physical features of your land (e.g. slopes, soil types, water logging, saline sites, dams, native vegetation etc.).
- Identify and record the land classes.
- Match farm enterprises with particular land classes.
- Draw the existing layout of the property on a second overlay (inc. fences, stock troughs, raceways etc.).
- Draw up a new 'realistic' plan on a third overlay based upon 'Best Practice' land management principles. You will need to consider:
 - location of sheds and arena
 - water resources
 - shelter belts
 - dams
 - number and size of paddocks, yards and stables
 - location of raceways, fences, gates and water troughs
 - number and types of enterprises.
- Tabulate, in priority order, the activities required to achieve the outcomes from the realistic plan (this should take into account, time, money and other commitments).

FOR PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION AND ADVICE

Contact the organisations below for free, detailed information pamphlets on each of the horse health problems described and land management options to prevent them.



Mt Lofty Ranges Catchment Program

Supported by Natural Heritage Trust

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