



# Living & Working on the Land

## THE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SUCCESS

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### KEEPING YOUR HORSE HEALTHY....& HAPPY

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### A DISCUSSION

- This seminar is designed to discuss keeping horses healthy on small to medium sized properties by discussing:
  - Physiology
  - Exercise
  - Diet
  - Land Management
  - Health Issues

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### “HORSE”

- Equus caballus – one of seven equine.
- An ungulate weighing 660-4,400 pounds.
- A prey animal with sensitive smell, eyes that can view 350 degrees and ears that can pivot 180 degrees.
- Grazes for nutrition, protection, and social interaction.
- Has incisor teeth capable of cropping forage close.
- Young can move within 15-25 minutes of birth.



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### EXERCISE & INTAKE



- Naturally – horses will move 10-20 miles (8 hours) each day.
- They will consume @ 3% of their body weight daily – 36# for 1,200# horse.
- They are very selective when allowed – GRASS!
- 1 AC = 60-120 laps for same exercise.
- No move – bored-cribbing, etc.

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### GROUNDCOVER NEEDED

- Groundcover allows selection.
- Groundcover prevents weeds.
- Groundcover prevents cholic and twisted gut.
- Groundcover prevents poisonings.
- Groundcover prevents erosion and many pests.



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### CARRYING CAPACITY

- In Wyoming most dry pasture grows 400-2000 TOTAL forage each YEAR.
- Only Half (200-1000#) may be used if groundcover is to be retained.
- Most Wyoming sites grow about 400# of usable forage per ACRE, per YEAR!
- A 1,200 pound horse eating 3% of BW will consume (36#/day) about 1,080# each month.
- Twelve months of consumption (not five) will consume 12,960# of production. (32.4 native acres).
- Horses graze even when fed hay if left on pasture.

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### OVER GRAZING – OPEN GROUND



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### HORSE HEALTH

- Check closely daily.
- Groom regularly.
- Vet checks.
- Farrier visits.
- Teeth floating.
- Walk pastures.
- Vaccinations.
- EXERCISE!



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### NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning – getting manure back into a productive role.
- Recycle, compost, or sell but do not keep!
- Generates pest and water quality issues as well as a vector for health pathogens.
- Don't ROLL IN IT!



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### SOME ISSUES

- Horses evolved on grass. Feeding high-phosphate alfalfa can impact young and old horses.
- Most additives are unneeded for low-exertion horses.
- Horses who are not bored seldom play with toys or crib when room and pasture is available.
- Horses need water and shelter at times, but can cope if terrain and geography allows them to respond to needs.
- Make sure that all facilities are well-built and have no sharp or jagged corners or obstructions.
- Questions???

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