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PENNFAQS

Lets Promote Happy Feet!

Have you ever wondered why one horse has really great feet, and another horse doesn't? It may seem weird, but I'm one of those people who spends time thinking about those kinds of things. Someone has to!

After thinking about it, reading what was out there on hoof quality issues, and some experimentation with our own horses, I reached the conclusion that there is no "black and white" answer to the question. It is multifactorial, and in reality, a combination of factors impact hoof quality.

First, there is the genetic and breed disposition affect. Just as we humans inherit physical qualities from our parents, horses inherit physical qualities from the mare and stud. A horse with poor feet will most likely pass on poor feet to its offspring. This is a very important thing to consider when you are breeding your mare. You know her hoof quality, and it's important to consider the stallion's feet as well.

Second, hoof quality is a very good "snap shot" of body condition. It reflects the current nutritional status of your horse really well. If body condition is poor, so is hoof quality of the animal. Keeping a horse in negative energy status leads to poor feet. Negative energy is when the horse is expending more energy than what they are taking in. If you are working a horse hard, to keep excellent hoof quality you have to keep the horse in a positive energy state.

Third, and I don't mean to state the obvious, but routine hoof care is vital for good feet. Trimming regularly to prevent cracks or deformity, cleaning to remove stones to prevent bruising and abscess, and making sure you have regular scheduled visits from a reputable farrier is very important to your horse's feet.

Finally, many studies show that biotin when fed at 12mg to 20mg each day will improve hoof quality. For best results, make sure your horse's ration includes a good amino acid profile and elevated levels of zinc.

For more detailed information, please contact Pennwoods.

Pennwoods Equine Products

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ALERT: According to feed info News Services, one of the major biotin producers, Zhejiang Medicine Co. Ltd. (China) suffered a major industrial accident injuring 14, & suspended biotin production until further notice. This triggered biotin to double in price in the last 2 weeks, & it is expected to double again in the next few weeks. Look for this to filter down & increase cost for biotin horse products very soon.