

Horses' Feet in Winter

The farm horse may not be doing much work in the winter, but that is no reason why his feet and legs should not be cared for. If the horse is on the road more or less the legs and ankles become coated with mud or ice and should have attention as soon as the animal is brought into the stable. If he is standing most of the day it is essential that the floor, of whatever material it may be composed, be kept clean.

One good way of caring for the feet and legs of a horse is to wipe them dry with a moist cloth when the animal is brought in, then with a stick of wood give proper attention to the hoof. One of the fertile sources of lameness in horses is neglect of the feet and lower legs. You might well make it a business, in cold weather, to rub a little vaseline in the frog of the foot and over the hoofs generally two or three times a week and always clean this part as thoroughly as any other.

The Horse's Leg

If the feet and legs of the horse are defective the animal itself is of comparatively little value. In every horse there are necessary qualities of foot and limb, irrespective of breed. If the feet and legs are sound, and especially the latter, there will as a rule be very little wrong with the animal itself. Discussing the leg of a horse, *The Horse World* says:

It is a common saying that a horse should have "flat bone." This is but partially correct, for there is no such thing as flat bone in the legs of a horse. The leg bones are like the blade of a razor in shape, with the back of the blade turned to the front and the thin edge to the back. Such a bone presents a flat surface looked at from the side, but cut through a section will have an elliptical shape. When the leg appears to be round that fact is caused by lack of development of lack tendons, and the presence of a surplus covering of coarse tissue. What we are after is a "flat leg." This is denoted by a clean, practically tissueless bone from the back of which the tendons stand out distinctly, and so that they can be readily grasped in the hand. From such a tendon and bone in the best draft horses of the Clydesdale breed and the improved English Shire the hair should grow as a silky fringe. Such hair or "feather," as it is often called, should not hide the bone and tendons nor surround the leg. Neither should it be coarse and kinky, like the dead horse hair stuffing of a sofa, or be so profuse in growth as to be plainly a nuisance. Hair of the right quality is a sure evidence of a flat compact "gun-metal" bone, and as a rule goes along with clean, well-marked tendons. Such bone is seen in the best class of the breeds mentioned, but it is by no means a special possession of these breeds.

When we have a clean leg and good joints the bones and the pasterns should be the next consideration, for no matter how nice may be the quality of the bone and tendons these good qualities are largely destroyed by a steep pastern, which makes the action stiff, stiff and sure to cause trouble from severe concussion. We require oblique pasterns to convey concussion—to gradually or easily convey the concussion from the feet to the pillar of the leg long above it. Looking at the profile of the leg the angle of the front of the hoof should be exactly that of the pastern. Any serious departure from an angle of 45 degrees is to be considered a grave error not to be set right by paring or shoeing, and to be rejected, if possible, in breeding. A springy pastern possessed by a horse having clean bone and well-marked tendons with or without the finer hair

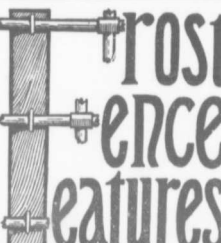
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alluded to above may be taken as indicative of free straight action.

Action and quality go together, and it remains in examining a horse to see that this is the case when he is moved at a walk and trot. If his legs are properly set and his joints under proper control he will go and come without "padding," or "wobbling." The feet will be carried in a straight line, and rise and fall rhythmically, showing the shoe soles flat and firm. A plummet line dropped from the centre of the knee and pastern joint and back of the foot and the same line hung from the hip joint should cross the centre of the foot and divide the gaskin in the middle. By this rule it will be easy to notice whether a leg good or bad is in or out of the proper position and whether the hind leg is crooked or sickle-hocked, hence prone to curbs and other ailments.

Spring Care of Sow

As the winter advances and the brood sow gets well advanced in pregnancy, she should be well looked after and be left largely to herself and not be run by horses or colts. She should not be allowed, or rather compelled, to drag herself over bars, rails, boards, troughs or other obstructions. While she should be allowed perfect freedom, she should not be compelled to wade mud holes or clamber over slippery bridges in getting to or from her pen. As the cold subsides and the warmer weather of spring takes its place, the corn that has been fed to keep up animal heat can well be replaced by other feed that is less fattening and better fitted to supply the elements of growth. The demands of the sow are heavy at this time and they should be met by feed so that her own vitality may not be reduced in order to supply the demands of her unborn litter.—Forest Henry.

Save the Wood Ashes

Wood is used for fuel on most Canadian farms and during the year there must be quite an accumulation of wood ashes, which in too many cases finds its way to the ash gatherer for a few bars of cheap soap.

Farmers making such an exchange do not know the value of the product they are bartering away. Wood ashes are especially valuable when worked in the soil about the roots of fruit trees. The flavor of fruit is improved by adding potash and wood ashes contain considerable potash. They are valuable whether leached or unleached, too valuable to be wasted.

Circulation Stopped It

"Hallo, Pat, I hear your dog is dead?"

"He is."

"Was it a lap dog?"

"It would lay anything."

"What did it die of?"

"It died of a Tuesday."

"I mean, how did it die?"

"It died on its back."

"I mean, how did the dog meet its death?"

"It didn't meet its death. It's death overtook it."

"I want to know what was the complaint?"

"No complaint. Everyone for miles round appeared to be satisfied."

"I wish to know how did it occur?"

"The dog was no cur; he was a thoroughbred animal."

"Tell me what disease did the dog die of?"

"He went to fight a circular saw."

"What was the result?"

"The dog only lasted one round."—Our Dogs.