

"It is quite possible, by scientific feeding, to make horses grow large and tall, or the reverse. One successful horse-raiser I know feeds plenty of bone meal to give his horses fine, bony structure. The land has much to do with their quality. The little city of Lexington, Ky., sells annually in her streets \$2,000,000 worth of horses. The blue grass country produces horses because of the phosphates in the soil. In caring for horses, remember that the farm horse does not want his skin made too sensitive by over-currying (1). He sweats freely. What he does need is to have his feet and legs taken care of. Put your chief care upon him at night, after his day's work is done. Clean out his feet thoroughly, leaving no mud to dry in. He gets rheumatism from it. You only need simple tools to work with; first, an old broom, and finish off with a wisp of straw, rubbing legs and feet well, hard and quick. Cut off the fetlock if you like; the feet, without it, dry off more quickly. To keep the horse clean and free from dust, a light blanket of cotton or jute costs less than the time for cleaning. Then, too, the blanket keeps the hair straight, and helps to keep it from growing. Never blanket a horse in the stable while he is warm, unless you give him a dry blanket shortly after.

"The driving horse must not be fat, but lean and hard, be well dressed, sensitive in mouth and skin.... The first great mistake in caring for horses is feeding too much hay; the second is not feeding often enough. A horse should be fed four times daily, and half the day's feed should come after 6 o'clock at night. More horses are hurt by over-feeding of hay than grain. A horse should not work over five hours without feed, and different horses require different food. Some horses do better on straw than hay."—*Farming*.

WORKING BROOD MARES.

"Killing two birds with one stone" is a performance which is perhaps more necessary to be done by farmers nowadays than it ever was. Every possible economy has to be practised in order to compete with foreign competition, meet the landlord, and pay the ever-increasing labour bill. Therefore farmers who have not already done so should combine work with breeding, for it is at least more likely that a mare which earns her living in the collar for, say, seven months in the year, and suckles a foal for the other five, will give a better return than one kept solely for the purpose of breeding, provided they are equally good and registered, for otherwise the offspring will never be so readily saleable.

It is a mistake to suppose that working mares breed less frequently than idle ones. If anything, the workers are more certain, and a great deal more likely to get safely through the foaling,

because they are necessarily in a more healthy and natural breeding condition.

Of course no sane horse-breeder would think of putting mares in foal between shafts for three months before foaling, or sending one along a slippery road with a heavy load on her back at any time. But even when these precautions are neglected, one often hears of satisfactory foalings taking place. Opinions differ as to the advisability of working mares when nursing. Personally I prefer to work them right up to the time of foaling than to shut up the foal and work them after. Many a promising youngster has been lost through having free access to the milk of a dam just returned in a heated state from work (1). Horsemen know that if the "foal is left with the dam it sucks at very frequent intervals," and therefore it is not surprising that a fast of several hours is almost certain to cause ill effects.

If the youngsters are intended for sale at weaning-time, the loss of bloom occasioned by working the dam means a corresponding loss in the price realised when the sale takes place.

It seems to me that the question of when they shall foal has to be left pretty much to chance and circumstances. If arrangements are made for an early foal, the mare will, in all probability, break service several times or miss a season. And there is no doubt that early foals cause a good deal of trouble and expense before they can be turned out to shift for themselves, and it is doubtful whether they make a sufficiently high price to compensate for this at the other end (2).

On the other hand, experience proves that foals which arrive from the middle to the end of April can hold their own against all comers. The sensational Shire, Rokeby Harold, champion at one year old, may be mentioned as an instance (for if I remember right he was foaled about April 19th). There is a further reason why the grass should be in view before the foals arrive; viz., that mares boxed up and fed on dry food are infinitely less likely to breed at first service than those out at grass, and breeders know that there is no better time to catch a mare than at nine or ten days after foaling. It is also worth considering that mares, although getting heavy, can perform a lot of very useful work in claims in the early spring, such as harrowing to prepare the seed bed, and also after the drill, and chain harrowing on the pastures. Thus they are able to lend a helping hand—if such it may be called—at the two busiest seasons on a corn-growing farm, spring and fall.

The demand for high-class draught horses is improving, and the improvement is likely to be helped by another revival in the export trade. Therefore farmers who wish to profit by it should breed as many good ones as possible.

Eng. Ag. Gazette.

(1) Never curry at all. The curry comb should be used to get the dust out of the brush, and should never touch the horse, except to clean the dried mud from the fetlock. *Ed.*

(1) As we know from experience. *Ed.*

(2) Racing mares must foal early, as the age of thoroughbreds is important as regards the 2-year old stakes. *Ed.*