



Winter is just around the corner...Is your horse ready?

With many parts of the province facing winter sooner rather than later this year, it's time to consider whether your herd, or horse, is ready for the cold weather and snow to come. As winter approaches, there are a few things that horse owners need to consider if they want their horses to travel through winter healthy and happy.

Adjust Feeding Programs: Before all else, make sure you have enough nutritious food available to last far into the spring of 2010. Not knowing when spring will come, in our province filled with fickle weather, is something that needs to be taken into account. As pasture quality or accessibility declines, consider increasing forage and/or adding concentrates. If you feed a hay with a low nutrient value when tested or plan to feed straw, you will need to supplement the nutrients by way of concentrates. Adding concentrates is something that needs to be done gradually as a rapid change to a horse's diet can have negative health consequences. Have a plan for your feeding program, when it will change, how much will be slowly introduced, how long you plan to work with this feed program and what it will cost. If your feeding program does not include a mineral supplement, add one, as it will help your horse absorb nutrients and is relatively inexpensive.



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