

Long-Time Efficiency Noted In Modern Horse Feeding

Long time efficiency rather than temporary economy should be the chief aim in feeding the modern pleasure and working saddle horse, Fred Hale, animal husbandry professor at Texas A&M, says.

Outlining the basic principles of feeding horses during the Horse Management and Training Short Course June 30-July 1 at the college, Hale said these animals vary more than do other farm stock in individual feed requirements. Age, temperament and type, as well as kind and amount and work done and the season, all influence feed needs.

He said intensity of work for the horse has no effect on protein requirements. A working animal needs but little more protein than when it is idle.

Horses have a higher maintenance requirement than do cattle in proportion to their size because of their nervous disposition. Mature, idle animals can be fed rations that consist largely of feeds low in net energy and in protein, but which produce much heat in the body for maintaining body temperature.

If a working horse is fed too much hay in the morning, it can develop digestive troubles. Mouldy or dusty hay can cause heaves. Horses require more salt than do other farm animals, especially when they work and sweat a lot.

The horse short course will become an annual affair because of Texas' rapidly expanding saddle horse industry, F. I. Dahlberg, A&M animal husbandry professor and program chairman, said. The expansion has been particularly evident in the Quarter Horse field.

Sponsors of the short course are the A&M Department of Animal Husbandry, School of Veterinary Medicine, and the American Quarter Horse Association. Talks and panel discussions covered a wide range of topics, including breeding, feeding, health, breaking and training, conformation, and a report on the 4-H Horse Program in Texas.

Hale emphasized that grass is a natural feed for horses.

"No one feedstuff is as complete in nutrients as is green pasture

grown on fertile soils," the professor said.

It is a good feeding principle to provide excellent pastures for brood mares, stallions and foals throughout the growing season.

"It is believed by experienced horse breeders that foals and yearlings fed for only normal growth will develop horses with feet and legs that will stand the strains of work better than where they become too fat," Hale said. "The young growing horse, as well as mature horses, responds to good, green pasture."

Idle, mature animals, he said may be adequately fed on grass alone. Working animals on good pasture at night do not necessarily need hay the next morning.

Two factors directly affect horse quality, Tom Cartwright, A&M geneticist, told the horsemen. They are environment and genetic makeup.

Color is a definite economic factor in horses, he said. The basic colors are black, chestnut and bay. A black horse bred to another black horse will not always produce a black colt. Chestnut is possible.

Chestnut to chestnut will never produce a black colt, he said. Bays are the most difficult to analyze genetically, but this can be done if the offspring can be seen and information is known about the animal's heredity.

Palominos are not true breeders as to color. The only way to be sure of getting a palomino colored colt is to mate a glass-eyed white animal to a chestnut. Cartwright said that no true abino horse has ever been found.

The geneticist said the more complex heredity factors are disposition, intelligence (cow sense), hardiness, stamina and speed.

He cautioned the horsemen against breeding toward extremes, as has happened sometimes in the cattle and hog business. Intelligence is one factor which can, but should not, be overlooked in the show ring.

Inbreeding, Cartwright said, is usually no good with horses. Line breeding, which is the practice of breeding to intensify certain char-

acters of an individual, is useful only when an animal is genuinely outstanding.

Another speaker, Roy Davis, editor of the Quarter Horse Journal at Amarillo, said Quarter Horses have become big business.

He said the AQHA sponsored 695 shows in 1960 involving about 18,000 horses. This year, the association expects to sponsor approximately 800 shows.

The editor said there has been a large increase in the circulation of major horse magazines, signifying the rise in interest in raising the animals. Two years ago, the Quarter Horse Journal had a circulation of 12,000. Now it has 26,000. Five years ago, the Western Horseman magazine's circulation was 80,000. This has since climbed to 127,000.

Dr. W. M. Romane of the A&M School of Veterinary Medicine described the cause and treatment of three common lamenesses in horses.

Founder, he said, is caused by overfeeding, riding the animal on hard surfaces, and failure to expel membranes after a mare foals. Treatment involves quick treatment by a veterinarian, antihistamines, cold enemas, ice packs on the feet, and a laxative in cases of over-feeding.

Mycetis fibrosis, which affects the muscle just above the hock, is brought on by bumping the legs in roping chutes, trailers, etc. Surgery is the only known treatment so far, Dr. Romane said.

SELF ANALYSIS

(Continued from Page 1) man, and President Walker as the discussion leader.

Those interested in research will convene in the Biological Sciences lecture room with Dr. H. O. Kunkel, professor of animal husbandry and biochemistry and nutrition, presiding, and Dean Aldrich will be the discussion leader.

Extension, off-campus activities, and services will meet in the Chemistry lecture room under the direction of John E. Hutchison, director of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service and Dr. Miller as the discussion leader.



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The Alcoa Foundation presents a check for \$1,250 to Texas A&M, for two scholarships to be awarded two students whose course of study is engineering in their senior class for the 1961-62 school year. Pictured, are, left to right, Fred Benson, dean of engineering; R. R. Suggs, works

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