

Horse News and Views



Horses are very environmentally friendly and they are rarely a source of, or concern for, groundwater contamination. To help prevent groundwater contamination, horse owners should:

- Refrain from using porous floors in stalls when the subsoil is gravel, sand or light loam.
- Maintain high volumes of bedding to absorb all urine. Sand-lined stalls could potentially allow for urine to leach into the porous subsoil and affect the groundwater.
- Ensure that all wash water used on horses or to clean stalls is directed away from field tiles and water courses.
- Ensure that run-off and water from eavestroughs is directed away from manure storage areas.
- Maintain buffer strips of grass between winter pasture areas and waterways to prevent contamination of streams.
- Provide water bowls and/or water tanks year round, rather than depending on ponds/streams as water sources for horses.
- Maintain low stocking densities (1 horse per acre or more). With higher stocking densities, special considerations, such as frequent manure pickup in fields and pastures, may be required.

È A horse produces 3/4 to 1 cubic foot of manure per day, in addition to an equal amount of bedding. Plan for 2 cu. feet of storage space per horse per day, with a 250-day storage period. This means that a minimum of 144 sq. feet of storage space, 3-4 feet high, will be needed per horse per year. With proper composting, this volume can be reduced to half.

For further information, contact Dr. Bob Wright (519) 846-3412 or visit our web site: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock>



Ontario Association
of
Equine Practitioners

UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH

Horse News and Views is prepared by
Dr. Bob Wright, Animal Health and Welfare,
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs,
Wellington Place, R.R. #1, Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W3
Telephone: 519-846-3412 Fax: 519-846-8101
E-mail: robert.wright@omafra.gov.on.ca

This version is available for distribution after March 1, 2006.

Please retain original format of article.