

Who and What

- Still looking for hay? Have extra hay you want to sell? **To trade hay in any state**, check www.agrihayexchange.com. Other agricultural and feed-related crops are also listed.

- **Appaloosa horses** homozygous for the spotting gene LP also have a **vision defect**, congenital stationary night blindness, while their heterozygous cousins have normal vision, according to research reported in *Veterinary Ophthalmology*. Homozygous coat patterns typically have few spots in white areas, while heterozygous coats have numerous spots in white areas and include leopard and spotted blanket patterns.

- Horse Journal reports ponies, draft breeds, and warmbloods are more efficient at **retaining body heat** than light breeds during cold weather, according to a study in Finland. At 59 degrees F., all horses dissipated the same amount of body heat, but at temperatures closer to zero, **light horses lost a greater amount of heat than heavier breeds**.

- Research funded by the United States Equestrian Federation found that **degenerative suspensory ligament desmitis**, a cause of lameness, is more complicated than originally thought. DSLD involves abnormal concentrations of proteoglycans in collagen tissues, and can affect any body tissue with a high connective tissue content. This includes the **aorta, coronary arteries, and many tendons and ligaments** in addition to the ligaments in the legs. Causes and treatments of the disease are still being studied.

- To preserve footing and prevent a muddy mess near wash racks and other areas where horses are hosed off, a **novel concrete mix** is being tested at the Kentucky Horse Park. Developed by the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture and manufactured by the Kentucky Ready Mix Concrete Association, the formula incorporates **concrete without sand**. The porous substance prevents splash-back, is not slippery, and **releases runoff slowly into the soil**.

- Scientist at Rutgers University have developed **Total Mixed Ration (TMR) Cubes, a combination of forage and concentrates** designed to be fed free-choice to replace both hay and grain. Trials with draft-cross weanlings and yearlings showed the cubes produced a **lower glucose/insulin response and fewer cases of developmental orthopedic disease than traditional diets**. The alfalfa/grass cubes might alleviate the problem seen with other "total ration" feeds when horses consume the entire day's ration fairly quickly and then become hungry and bored several hours after being fed.

- **Breeding statistics for Thoroughbreds in 2007** showed that 2,808 stallions covered 56,796 mares. Kentucky reported 21,724 mares bred, more than three times the number in second-place Florida (6,376). Other top states for Thoroughbred breeding were California, Louisiana, New York, Texas, New Mexico, Maryland, and Oklahoma. Stallions covering more than 100 mares numbered 125. Stormy Atlantic bred the most mares (199); other top stallions were Johannesburg (195), Wildcat Heir (177), With Distinction (177), and Giant's Causeway (176).

- According to a study at the Guelph Equine Research Center, horses that were fed **powdered ginseng** for 28 days prior to receiving vaccinations for **equine herpesvirus** developed antibodies faster than a control group that did not receive ginseng. Similar studies in humans have shown the same result.
- **Mares in heat** sometimes show behaviors such as kicking, tail swishing, or bolting when ridden. Danish researchers have found a correlation between pneumovagina, a condition in which air and bacteria are drawn into the vagina, and “marish” behavior. They theorize that **shared spinal neurons reacted to irritation** in the vagina by causing hypersensitivity in skin areas in and around the hindquarters. In 12 of 14 studied mares, signs of discomfort waned after the vagina was partially closed with a **Caslick’s procedure** that prevented the entry of air.
- What are the **best-selling equine products** after feed? A market survey by a Dallas-based firm indicated the five **products most commonly purchased** are dewormers, fly control preparations, skin and coat care products, hoof care products, and dietary supplements.
- **Taking a great picture of your horse:** how hard can it be? For the best results, keep these important things in mind:
 - Choose a **level spot** with an uncluttered background and good contrast with the horse’s coat. Stand the horse up “square” or with legs slightly offset from each other.
 - Outdoor photography on an **overcast but bright day** eliminates shadows. The sun should be behind the photographer, not behind the horse. Shooting early in the morning or late in the afternoon will give the best results.
 - Stand **opposite the horse’s shoulder** or mid-barrel, not in front of or behind him. The camera should be 15 to 20 feet from the horse to avoid distortion.
 - The horse should be **nicely groomed** and in a clean, well-fitting halter or bridle.
 - Rattling stones in a can or squeezing out a small puff from a container of baby powder can get the horse’s attention and encourage him to **put his ears forward** (coordinate this with one or two handlers, and keep safety in mind—some horses are easily startled).

Wins and Wows

- Laura Akerlund was named 2007 **Youth Member of the Year** by the American Junior Paint Horse Association. The award recognized Akerlund’s dedication, commitment, and caring attitude toward her community and her regional Paint Horse club. Akerlund lives in Grafton, Wisconsin.
- The **adoption fee of \$50,000** for Hail Yeah, an American Mustang, set a record as the highest fee paid to the Bureau of Land Management for a mustang. Hail Yeah was adopted after completing the Extreme Mustang Makeover in Fort Worth, Texas. During the 100-day training course, wild mustangs are broken to saddle and then ridden and driven in such diverse activities as dressage and cowboy mounted shooting. The normal adoption fee for a wild mustang is \$125.
- Late last fall, Mario Pino became the fifteenth jockey in North America to **ride 6000 winners**. He’s also the all-time winningest jockey in Maryland, with 4,830 victories. Pino has been riding races for thirty years.



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