

Harmany Horse Gazette

Harmany Equine's Web letter

Sept 2008

In This Issue

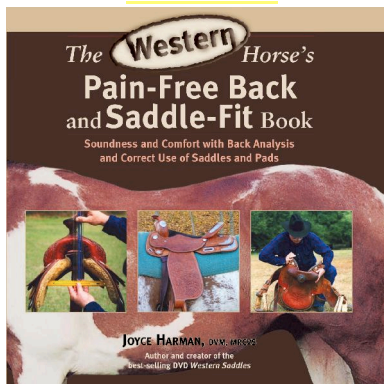
Welcome
Fall Laminitis
Toxins in Wood

Our newsletters are now archived with a link from the [home page](#)

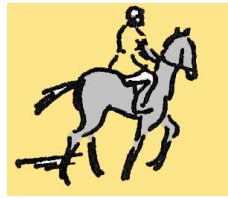
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Welcome to Harmany Equine's newsletter

Fall is coming and with it great weather for riding, my favorite season for fall colors in the trees and more grass growing. I hope everyone will get out and ride lots before winter sets in. My horse is actually fairly fit this fall, her backbone is visible and if I look hard I can even find some ribs-she is the proverbial easy keeper. All summer she has been in the fat paddock along with the largest horse on the property, a draft cross. All the quarter horses have been out eating good grass.

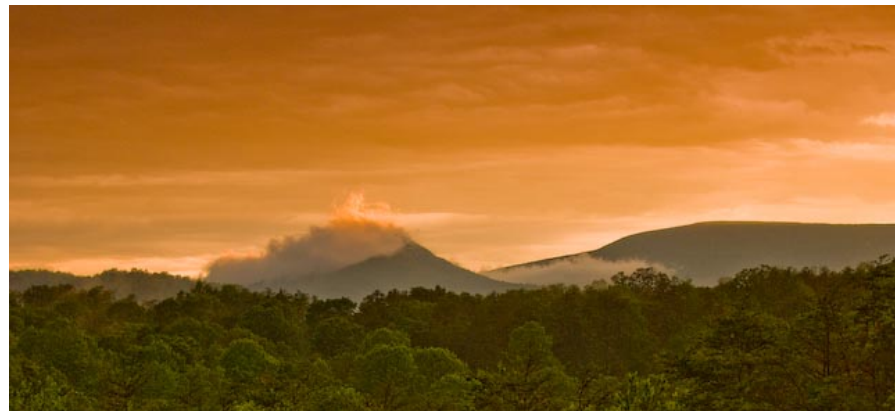
A few rains have come, not the amount some of the surrounding areas have had, but enough to assure us of good grazing right through the fall. The middle of the summer was a bit too dry around here.

I will be on vacation part of this month, so if you send a query about something in the newsletter, it will not be answered until the end of the month. I will get to it, I promise, just not right away.

Have a wonderful fall, and give your horse a hug, just because.

Please send ideas for articles ([Harmany Equine](#)) and products you would like to see us carry in the shop ([Harmany Equine Shop](#)). And if you wish, give us some feedback [email feedback](#). Thanks and have a great summer.

Joyce Harman DVM, MRCVS

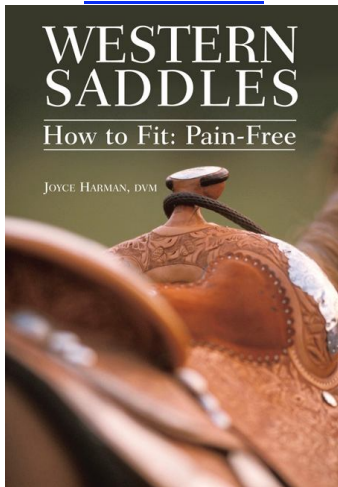


Fall Laminitis

The fall season usually brings a bit more rain to dry areas; certainly it does down the east coast. This is welcome, unless you have a laminitis prone, easy keeper. If you do, the drought is the best thing since sliced bread.

The cycle of life in nature goes like this: Winter has a very limited, very poor food supply, so horses in nature in the winter get pretty skinny, but

[Book DVD set](#)



they survive. Spring comes with fresh green grass and they pack the weight on, making up for lost calories in the winter. Summertime is a stable time for food, usually, and warm weather does not burn extra calories. Fall comes and their bodies know that starvation is around the corner, so the body says it is time to pack on as much weight as possible. All species do this, birds for migration, bears for hibernation and even look at your domestic cats and dogs—all tend to gain weight on the same amount of food you have fed all year. Winter comes and the cold weather along with lack of food burns all that fat off. And the cycle continues.

The problem is, we do not starve our horses in the winter, so the weight Mother Nature says to gain in the fall does not go away. Then spring comes with rich grass and more weight goes on. This is the laminitis cycle.

A recent paper measured the size of the crest of the neck and its relationship to laminitis risk. As the crest gets larger, the risk of laminitis significantly increases. Find the Sept 2008 issue of EQUUS magazine (does not appear to be online) for pictures of the different crests. Horses with a score of 3 or above were more likely to have high levels of Insulin in their blood, which is a sign of Insulin Resistance. Another article online [Measuring fat in horses](#) will help you decide if your horse is overweight. Get a weight tape and check every 10 days or 2 weeks if you are trying to help your horse lose weight. If that crest is big, hard or lumpy be sure to remove grain and put him/her on a strict diet.

One of the best cures for overweight horses is to ride them. But if you cannot ride the weight off check out the [laminitis](#) section on my web site. [OB Formula](#) is one of the most popular products to help supplement horses with obesity and insulin resistance. Two new products that I have used quite a bit and now carry on the web site are from Hilton Herbs. [Metabolyte Gold](#) is a liquid herbal formula that some horses like better than the OB formula. This helps with glucose and energy metabolism. If you are not seeing results with one of these formulas, try the other one (OB or Metabolyte Gold).

[Vitex Plus](#) was part of a master's research project on older Cushings and Insulin Resistant horses. It seems to help horses who are having trouble shedding.



Toxins in wood

Did you know the treated lumber commonly used in barns and for fencing is toxic? The chemical it is treated with is Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA=chromium and copper with mostly arsenic), so when horses chew on wood as they are prone to do, they ingest Arsenic in high quantities. Arsenic is a natural trace mineral required by the body in a few parts per million. Any amount over that harms the liver, kidneys, can cause diarrhea, vomiting in humans, fatigue, depression, and certain types of cancer.

When working with treated lumber you should never expose yourself or your animals to the dust or sawdust. Wear a face mask and clean the area carefully. Do not feed your dogs on a treated porch floor, they will lick up spilled food. Cover wood horses could chew on with metal or fence them out of it. Be sure they have plenty of [free choice minerals](#) so they are less likely to chew on the wood.

I find one of the most common toxins present in horses is arsenic. We use a high quality hair analysis laboratory to find toxins. Many horses have been exposed to other sources of toxins as well, such as those from feed grown with sludge (or pastures that were fertilized with sludge), fertilizer run off from neighboring farms, pesticide exposure from spraying or water supplies and left over dumps on old farms.

If you are interested in a hair analysis for your horse, please call the office number (540-229-1855) to order one. It takes about 4 weeks to get results. The price includes written suggestions and a free 10-minute consult if needed. Longer discussions about the effects of toxins your horse can be arranged as a regular telephone consultation.

For more information on the toxins associated with building, and for safe, green ideas see [Natural home magazine](#), [Toxins in pets](#) is an article that discusses the exposure our small animals have to environmental toxins.

Thanks

Thanks for reading this newsletter. I would love to hear your feedback, good and bad, suggestions, and requests. Joyce Harman

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