

# Pennsylvania Cutting Horse Association

## January 2020



*Thank you, Susan, for this picture of Dave & Jack!  
Everyone feel free to email pictures to [info@pchacutting.com](mailto:info@pchacutting.com)*

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## A WORD FROM OUR SECRETARY

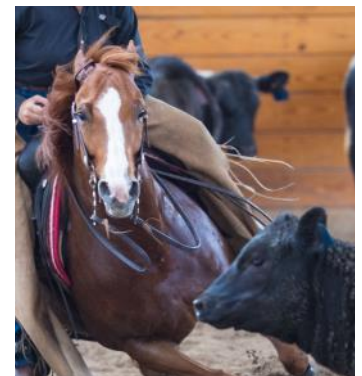
Welcome to the new decade!

We're happily surprised to have green grass still on the ground, and cautiously watching the weather forecaste as winter sets in.

Voting has been completed, and the 2020 slate of officers & board members.....

We're starting off the new year with articles about training, supplies and equine health. This issue includes the 2020 show schedule, with regional championship information, and we can't wait to get going on that!

Joanne Thayer



# 2020 SHOW SCHEDULE

The 2020 show season will bring with it a few changes:

In preparation for NCHA's plan to include regional championships for the weekend cutter, hopefully starting in 2021, Area 4 will be hosting their own regional championship in 2020. Participating in Area 4 are areas 19, east part of area 17 and Canada.

The shows designated as "Regional" are qualifying shows for the Area 4 championships; current proposal is you must compete in 40-50 percent of these shows to be eligible. This championship is still in the planning stages, with any changes and final information to be announced at a later date. This show will likely be held in conjunction with the October show at Dream Park.

PCHA will continue our practice of annual PCHA standings & awards, with shows in our new locations at Bloomsburg and Dream Park. The qualifying shows for PCHA year end awards are designated under the PCHA column.

Date	Location	Regional	PCHA
April 25-26	Elkins WV	Yes	
May 16-17	Bloomsburg, PA	Yes	Yes
May 23-24	JMJ Farm Lewsiburg WV	Yes	
June 13-14	Bloomsburg, PA	Yes	Yes
June 20-21	OPEN		
June 27-28	Doswell, Va	Yes	Yes
July 11-12	Elkins, WV	Yes	
July 18-19	Garwood Arena Columbiana OH		
July 25-26	Dream Park, PA	Yes	Yes
August 7-9	Shelbeyville, KY		
August 10-11	Louisville, KY		
Sept 12-13	Bloomsburg, PA	Yes	Yes
Sept 19-20	OPEN		
Sept 29-Oct 3	CONGRESS Columbus OH		
October 10-11	JMJ Farm Lewsiburg WV	Yes	
Oct 24-25	Dream Park, PA	Yes	Yes
Nov 4-5	North American Louisville KY		
Nov 6-8	Shelbyville, KY		



## 2019 / 2020 UPCOMING EVENTS WITH BARB & SANDY

January 24-26, Art of the Cowgirl - Phoenix, Az - Sandy

February 7-9, High Performance Clinic - Queen Creek, AZ - Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Centre

April 30 - May 4, Women's Riding and Wholeness Retreat - Granby, CO. Barbra with Julie Goodnight

September 29 - October 1, Save the Date - Brasada Ranch - Powell Butte, OR

# IT'S NOT JUST IN YOUR HEAD

*Barbra Schulte*

We've all experienced what I'm about to say.

You feel nervous ... or anxious. You think thoughts like, "I'm not good enough," or "I'll never get it together," or "There's no way this horse can compete here," or "I'm too old!"

Do you know what happens in your body when you feel threatened like that?

There's a hormone called cortisol that spikes in your bloodstream. It's the fight or flight syndrome and it feels awful ... as you know.

Your muscles become like knots. Your balance and connection with your horse get way off. Your muscles are so tight there is no way you can feel your horse like you normally do ... or respond to his or her needs. Plus you might use your feet or hands at the wrong time and cause something you don't want ... like rolling forward in a cutting turn.

And, of course, because our horses pick up on our emotions like a lightning rod, they get all jazzed up, too.

Plus, there's usually a spike in your brain waves which impacts your ability to be clear thinking and open to possibilities.

However, if you notice this is going on, you can decide to see that difficult situation as a challenge and even an opportunity to grow. Then EVERYTHING not only changes in your mind, and in your emotions ... but also in your body.

Research shows that if you respond to huge stress as a challenge, instead of as terror, this can lead to an entire chain of biochemical responses in the body which help you cope.

I think that is amazing.

You begin to feel good, alert, energized, focused and ready to take on the challenge.

The way to do this is to become highly skilled at self-awareness as well as in acting and thinking skills to turn things around. Those are topics for another day ... but you can do that.

Then, during difficult times, when you become challenged you'll not only change your mind, but you'll also change your body. I love that! And so will your horse.



# UNDERSTANDING **CATTLE** **7 STEPS** FOR MAKING GOOD DECISIONS **IN THE HERD**

By Barbra Schulte

It's easy to wait to hear your name called and then rely on your trainer for a cow plan as you walk to the herd.

However, I believe this is the slow road to becoming skilled in the herd.

There is so much you can do to set yourself up for herdwork success ... as you collaborate well with your trainer or #1 helper.



Here are 7 steps to help you make the best possible decisions in the herd:

- 1. Have a plan for your herdwork. Will you cut shape, specific cattle, or both?** Be proactive in planning details. Will you watch cattle? Who will keep your horse warm? When will you get on your horse? If you cut shape, where will your eyes be? Then there's the universal plan for all cutters: cut your cow way up and in the middle of the arena.
- 2. During your warm up and/or as you practice watching cattle in previous classes, mentally rehearse scanning the cattle as you walk through the herd.** This mental rehearsal will prepare you to see situations as they change as well as respond to them moment to moment during your show run. The ability to scan the cattle by moving your head and observing the big picture of what is going on in the herd, as well as seeing the cow you want to cut, is one of the most important skills for making good decisions in the herd.
- 3. Set up a communication system with your helpers for the cuts prior to your run.** Who is your main person? Visit with them about things they say during your cuts that really help you. By initiating a conversation about what confuses you and what helps you prior to your run, you will set yourself up for success during your cuts because everyone will be on the same page.
- 4. Get into a calm and focused state of mind before you walk to the herd.** Review your herdwork plan. Focus on what you will do. Feel grounded and patient ... yet authoritative. Put your chin up and shoulders back. Keep your eyes on the herd. Breathe.
- 5. On each cow, enter the herd with purpose. Know where you are going and why you are moving in a specific direction before you enter the herd on each cut.** Remember to pause, breathe and take time to do regroup and re-focus before your 2nd and 3rd cuts. It's easy to feel mentally sped up after working a cow. Always enter the herd with purpose. Resist the tendency to just start walking and then decide what to do.
- 6. Walk through the herd with patience and purpose as you continually scan the cattle to evaluate how the situation is shaping up moment by moment.** Scanning allows you to see and take advantage of opportunities to drive your cow way out, up and to the middle of the arena. Scanning is the master skill of making good decisions.
- 7. Get re-grounded between cattle.** Have a routine between cattle. Quit with smooth hand motions. Turn your horse slowly. Pause. Breathe. Decide what your next move will be. And only then, continue on.

# HAY

*Partially excerpted from article on BestHorsePractices.com by Maddy Butcher*

Hay consumption is a critical part of your horse's health. Qualities of pastures and hay vary depending on myriad elements including soil, weather, season, and time of harvest. Even the hour at which your crop is cut and how it's stored can impact quality.

Each day, horses typically need to consume about two percent of their weight in hay. A thousand-pound horse will need 20-25 pounds of hay per day. That amount will vary depending on several factors, including age, metabolism, and activity. Mares and foals will need more calories and nutrients, for instance. Horses in heavy work will need more, too. Ponies, donkeys, and mules generally can get by with less, either because of their metabolism or ability to digest poorer quality feed.

While experienced hay tossers may judge a bale's worth by look, feel and smell, the more precise measure of quality comes from hay analysis. These laboratory findings typically show the following measurements:

- Ω **Moisture:** optimal value is 10-17 percent.
- Ω **Crude Protein (CP):** Horses need about 10 percent crude protein in their diet. Grass hay yields between eight and 14 percent CP. Mixed grasses with legumes yield 14-17 percent. Legumes (alfalfa and clover) yield 15-20 percent.
- Ω **Acid Detergent Fiber (ADF)** – this value concerns poorly digested material like cellulose and lignin. Lower scores are better. 30-35 percent is acceptable. Values higher than 45 percent indicate poor nutrient content.
- Ω **Neutral Detergent Fiber (NDF)** – this value indicates insoluble fiber, like the cell walls in the plant. 40-50 percent is acceptable. Values over 65 percent are found in hays not acceptable for horses.
- Ω **Equine Digestible Fiber (DE)** – Horses in light work need about 20 megacalories (mcal) per day. Most hays have between .76-.94 mcal per pound. If the value is less, hay may not be suitable for horses.
- Ω **Hay testing may also include measurements for other components**, especially calcium and other minerals. Generally speaking, the more energy your horse needs, the more you'll want to pay attention to these more specific quantities.

## Here are some questions to ask yourself as you consider your next round of purchasing:

- Ω Does your hay provider send off for regular analyses?
- Ω Does he fertilize the fields?
- Ω Does he test the soil? (The soil's health is a direct determinant in the nutritive quality of the hay.)
- Ω If you buy untested hay, you can always have it tested yourself. Be sure to provide a good sample selection, which a hay probe can be helpful with.
- Ω The stage of maturity when the crop is cut provides the foundation of its nutritional value. Flowers, seed heads, and thick stems are examples of an older plant. As plants age, they will have more fiber and less protein. Leaves have more protein and digestible energy than stems.
- Ω Bleached out hay can indeed indicate the loss of vitamin A, but don't mulch it! Other nutrients are still present.
- Ω Crops grown in cooler conditions (first cut hay) will have more digestible fiber.
- Ω All other variables being equal, weather (precipitation and temperature), is the biggest factor determining the success of a hay season.

Slow feeders do a great job of forcing the horse to mimic natural grazing behavior and therefore maintain a healthier routine, according to this research.



An advertisement for Mill Pond Veterinary Clinic and Kennels. The ad features a central logo with a horse and the text "Mill Pond Veterinary Clinic and Kennels". To the right, it says "Your Full Service Pet Destination". Below this, it lists services: "Veterinary Care for Small Animals &amp; Special Species", "Small Animal Rehabilitation", "Feline &amp; Canine Boarding", "Canine Training", and "Canine Daycare". The ad also includes contact information: "QUAKERTOWN, PA 215-536-4443 / MILLPONDVETCLINIC.COM". The background of the ad shows a white dog, a black dog, a cat, a parrot, and a rabbit in a grassy field.

# REDUCING WINTER COLIC



The term colic can encompass all forms of gastrointestinal and abdominal conditions which cause pain. Impaction-related colics are more common in the winter. When ingested feed stops moving through the horse's gut efficiently, the material can accumulate and form a blockage. Feed and gas then back up behind the blockage, causing distention of the intestine and associated pain. A colicking horse in winter may not be sweaty, but be on the lookout for restlessness, dry and/or scant manure, lying down more than usual and "flank gazing" as he looks back at his painful sides. Thankfully, impactions are typically easy to diagnose and early treatment usually gets things moving again. In more severe cases, hospitalization or surgery might be necessary. Of course, it's easier if colic doesn't occur in the first place. Here are some ways to mitigate the cold-weather risks:

**1- Hydration.** Horses need 10 to 12 gallons of water a day to avoid dehydration, which can cause problems ranging from discomfort to impaction. **The leading cause of colic in winter is lack of fresh, unfrozen water.** Water that is icy cold may cause a horse to turn away, and frozen water is undrinkable. A few things you can do are:

- A) **Heat your water.** This can be accomplished through buckets that are insulated or have built-in heaters, or through heaters designed to be put in the water. *Note: If your horse isn't drinking from a heated bucket or trough, offer him water in a plain bucket. If he drinks, there may be a short in the heated supply.*
- B) If you do not want heated buckets, at least fill your horse's bucket with **hot water two to three times a day.**
- C) Offer a **warm-water mash twice daily** to help keep your horse hydrated. You can make a nutritionally balanced mash using a bagged mash mix or senior feed, or mixing a grain mash with your feed.
- D) **Soak** your hay &/or feed. This takes only a few minutes, and most horses don't seem to mind wet food.

**2- The second colic risk factor associated with winter is exposure to cold temperatures**

- A) **Increasing the forage.** Horses require more calories in the winter just to stay warm, and the body's fermentation process for digestion also generates heat & helps maintain body temperature. 24-hour forage access ensures the fermentation process never slows or stops. A slow-feeder for hay is also an excellent option.
- B) **Shelter** is critical in the winter. Shelter from cold rain & sleet, shelter from freezing winds. Hypothermia can develop quickly, and will need to be dealt with immediately. The first thing to do is bring your horse in from the environmental hazards. A barn, shed or garage can work to help with warming your horse.
- C) A horse with a full hair coat should have no trouble staying warm on the coldest of winter days, even without a blanket, as long as he remains dry and has access to shelter. **Blankets** are useful for show horses and those that have been body-clipped. Be sure to always replace or remove a soaked blanket immediately because the moisture will freeze, trapping the cold and causing the horse to lose precious body heat.

**3- Motion: let your horses out in the fields as much as possible-** assuming shelter and unfrozen water are available. Moving around is helpful, and the foraging will keep that gut moving. *(Remember, snow is frozen water. Even if your horse eats it, this may contribute to hypothermia.)*

**4- Weather:** With a possible link to storm fronts and colic, **keep an eye on the forecast** and be extra vigilant when a storm front is moving in. Make sure your horse has water, forage and some room to move around as soon as is feasible. Also, try to avoid making changes to his routine and management when the weather changes. When the storm arrives, check your horses regularly and watch closely for signs of colic.

Sources:

AAEP, Scott Leibsle, DVM, <https://aaep.org/horsehealth/cold-weather-colic>

Equus, Katie Searbaugh, DVM, <https://equusmagazine.com/horse-care/preventing-winter-colic-horses-25990>



# **PCHA** Pennsylvania Cutting Horse Association

Visit us on the web at [www.pchacutting.com](http://www.pchacutting.com)

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