



## **Caswell County Horse Bits Newsletter October 2016**

Hope everyone had a great summer riding and participating in horse shows. Just wanted to let you know that the Caswell County Horsemen's Association had another successful Coggins Clinic and NC/VA Horse Festival this year. Since the Caswell County Horsemen's Association has not met this year thus far, I will begin writing a short newsletter from time to time with equine topics. All of the help and suggestions would be appreciated for topics for future Caswell County Horsemen's Association meetings.

### **Hurricane Season is Coming!**

Hurricane season is upon us. North Carolina is no stranger to hurricanes, and this year is predicted to be potentially more severe than recent years especially with Hurricane Matthew potentially hitting the North Carolina coast. Here are some tips to help prepare your horses and your farm for a storm.

#### **Before the Storm**

- **Vaccinations:** All horses should have a tetanus toxoid vaccine within the last year. Due to the increase in mosquitoes after massive rainfall, all horses should also receive West Nile Virus and Eastern/Western Encephalitis vaccines at the beginning of the hurricane season.
- **Coggins Test:** A negative Coggins will be necessary if the horse needs to be evacuated to a community shelter or across state lines.
- **Health Certificate:** A health certificate is required to cross the state line. This may be necessary if you live in a region that is near the SC/VA borders. A health certificate is valid for 30 days.

- Identification: Each horse should have at least 2 forms of identification (in case one is lost). Have proof of ownership, including recent photos of the horse including any identifying marks/scars/coloration, ready in the event that you need to claim a loose horse. Examples of possible identifying methods include:
  - A well fitted breakaway halter (a regular halter can get trap a horse and possibly strangle them!) with contact information (can be in the form of a luggage tag, a metal ID tag, a zip lock bag secured with duct tape to the halter)
  - A luggage tag with ID braided into the mane or tail (make sure it is water proof).
  - Livestock marker - write your phone number on the horses's hindquarters with a waterproof livestock marker
  - Microchip
  - ID bands that go around the horse's neck
- Evacuation Plan: Hurricanes generally give us at least a day's notice or two before coming into contact with land. Make sure that you have a written evacuation plan for your horses, especially if you are in a low-lying area, a flood plain, near water, or are near the coast. If you will be in the path of the hurricane, it is highly recommended to evacuate prior to the storm, as transportation with horses when wind gusts are over 40mph is hazardous. Decide at which point you will evacuate (for a category 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 storm?). Also prioritize NOW which horses will be evacuated in what order if you will have to make more than one trip.
  - Determine two evacuation centers (in opposite directions). For a list of evacuation centers in NC near you, click here: <http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/livestock/horse/EquineDisasterResponseAlliancePartners.htm>
  - Ensure that your truck and horse trailer are ready for travel (tires in good condition, etc.). Ensure that the vehicle is full of gas.
- Water: Power loss often occurs with hurricanes, and many horse farms may find that they are unable to provide water to their horses. Each horse should have 12-20 gallons of water stored per day. Fill all available water troughs. Be creative with your water resources! Line garbage cans and various storage bins or much buckets with plastic contractor bags and fill them with water. Consider a generator to run the well if you have large numbers of horses. Keep chlorine bleach on hand to add to contaminated water if necessary. To purify water, add two **drops** of chlorine bleach per **quart** of water and let stand for 30 minutes.
- Feed: Store a minimum of 72 hours of feed and hay (seven days is best) per horse. It is very possible that roads will be closed because of down power lines and trees and that you will not have access to feed for a period of time after the storm. Cover hay with water proof tarps and store on pallets. Keep grain in water tight containers in the event of flooding.
- Farm Preparation: Secure all moveable objects. Remove all items from hallways. Secure jumps, lawn furniture, etc. in a secure place. Place all large

vehicles/tractors/trailers in an open field where trees cannot fall on them. Turn off electrical power to the barn to avoid any potential fire hazards with power surges or lightning strikes. Secure all gates. Ensure that all emergency tools are working properly and readily available. These include:

- Chain saw (and fuel!)
- Hammer/nails
- Fence repair materials
- Wire cutters/tool box/pry bar
- Fire extinguisher
- Duct tape
- Fuel for generator/tractor
- **Emergency First Aid Kit:** Make sure that you have an emergency first aid kit ready and accessible (and waterproof!). Have any medications that a horse will need easily accessible and ensure that you have enough to get you through the storm and the aftermath. Some items that should be included:
  - Bandages (leg wraps and quilts)
  - Antiseptics
  - Scissors/knife
  - Topical antibiotic ointments
  - Tranquilizers
  - Pain relievers (bute, banamine, etc.)
  - Flashlight with extra batteries
  - Extra halters/lead ropes
  - Clean towels
  - Fly spray/swat

### **During the Storm**

- **In or Out?** Should horses be left in the pasture or in the barn? Recommendations from the American Association of Equine Practitioners say that if the pasture has good fencing and limited trees, it is probably best to leave horses outside. Well constructed pole-barns or concrete block barns may provide safety from flying debris, but the horses may become trapped if the wind collapses the building. If you have a sturdy shelter with access to a small, safe paddock, this would be ideal. A horse could escape the building if needed into a safe area.
  - Keep horses out of pastures and areas with electrical lines. If these come down, they can electrocute the animals nearby.
  - Trees with shallow roots will fall easily under hurricane force winds and can injure horses or destroy fencing.
  - Do not keep horses in areas secured by barbed wire, electrical wire, or high tensile wire during a hurricane.
  - Fire ants and snakes will search for high ground during flooding. Keep this in mind when selecting an area to keep your horses if they are to remain in pasture.

- For tips on NC Animal Disaster Sheltering Resources click here:  
<http://www.ncagr.gov/oep/sheltering/manuals.htm>

### **After the Storm**

- Inspect Animals: Carefully inspect all horses for injuries, focusing particularly on the eyes and limbs.
- Inspect Property: Look for down power lines, fence damage, and misc. debris. Take photos of storm damage to present to insurance companies.
- Missing Horse?: If your horse is missing, contact your local county animal control, sheriff's department, or disaster response team.  
<http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/livestock/horse/EquineDisasterResponseAlliancePartners.htm>

If you have any horse related questions or how we can promote the horse industry here in Caswell County more, feel free to call me here at the office----336-694-4148 or send me an e-mail at [joey\\_knight@ncsu.edu](mailto:joey_knight@ncsu.edu). Hope each and everyone of you have a safe fall while enjoying riding your horses before winter sets in.

Sincerely,



Joey E. Knight, III

Caswell County Extension Director

Persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency may request accommodations to participate by contacting Joey E. Knight, III County Extension Director at 336-694-4158 (phone) or [joey\\_knight@ncsu.edu](mailto:joey_knight@ncsu.edu) (email) or 336-694-5930 (fax), or in person at the Caswell County Extension office at least (5) days prior to the event. Employment and program opportunities are offered to all people regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.