Volume IV ♦ Issue III ~ Real Learning for Real Life ~ FallB 2007

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Texas Cooperative EXTENSION
The Texas A&M University System
Tarrant County

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Texas 4-H is celebrating our Centennial year! In 1908, T.M. (Tom) Marks, county agricultural agent, organized the first boys' "corn club" in Jack County. The program has grown until today when there are 4-H clubs and activities in all 254 counties in Texas.

4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills. Texas 4-H is open to all youth between the ages of 9 and 18.

In Tarrant County during this Centennial year, we have 24 4-H clubs, 256 4-H club members, and 145 4-H volunteer adult leaders. For a list of Tarrant County 4-H clubs, see page 8.

To learn more about 4-H and how to get involved contact our Tarrant County 4-H office at 817-884-1291.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.
The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.

Equine Vaccination

Kenneth Johnson, Jr.
County Extension Agent - Agriculture & NR

Vaccinating your horse for disease prevention is a simple task. It's not terribly time consuming, and it's relatively inexpensive when you consider the alternative of treating a disease or having to euthanize. However some people don't vaccinate due to a lack of concern regarding disease risk.

The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) recommends that horses be seen by a veterinarian twice a year for wellness exams to address vaccination, parasite control, nutrition and dentistry. Veterinarians agree that the risk of disease is just too high if you don't vaccinate. If your horse develops tetanus, the odds of him dying are about 99 percent. The fatality rate for West Nile virus, based on statistics over the last three years, is at least 30 to 40 percent. The fatality rate for rabies is 100 percent.

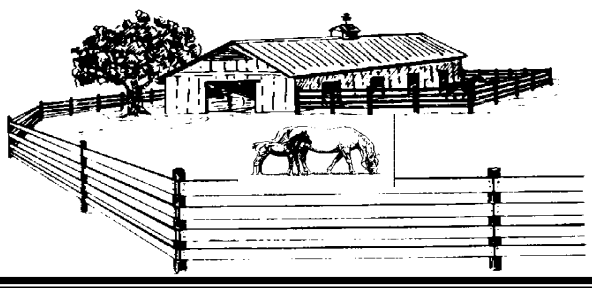
Vaccination does not equal immunization, a horse has to mount an immunological response, i.e., produce antibodies or other immune responses to the vaccine following vaccination. This response will vary depending upon the vaccine used and the horse's own immunity. Not all horses will mount an immune response to vaccination, approximately 10 percent don't, and those that do respond differently. Stressed horses, malnourished horses or those that are otherwise unhealthy may not mount a good immunological response to vaccination.

Vaccination is only an aid in prevention of infectious disease, and won't succeed without appropriate management practices. To reduce your horse's exposure to disease follow these basic horse keeping practices:

- Avoid contact with sick horses.
- Quarantine new incoming horses. Without a quarantine system, there is a very serious threat for bringing in infectious disease to an established herd or group of horses.
- Avoid contact with outside horses on trail rides, horse shows, etcetera.
- Avoid using universal waterers or feed sources.
- Reduce or eliminate stress, because it has a negative effect on the immune system.
- Vaccinate all horses in a herd or on a farm on the same schedule whenever possible.

Vaccination programs should be tailored to each individual horse and farm. Upon consultation with a veterinarian a vaccination program including frequency is developed for your herd. Most veterinarians recommend that a horse be vaccinated against tetanus, Eastern equine encephalomyelitis, Western equine encephalomyelitis, West Nile virus and rabies. Whether or not horses receive rhino [equine herpes virus], flu, strangles, some of the other vaccines, depends on the part of the country they live in and what the veterinarian thinks is appropriate.

All the experts agree that your veterinarian is the best source of information when designing and implementing a vaccination program best suited to the needs of your horse. Your vet is familiar with the risk of disease in your area, risk of disease to your farm and/or individual horses on that farm, knows the consequences of diseases, and is familiar with the efficacy and safety of different vaccines.



Competitive Games: Is My Child Ready?

Marian Ross, M. S.
County Extension Agent—
Family and Consumer Sciences

Do you remember the first time you played a game and won or lost? Do you remember how you felt? The reaction of friends or family witnessing the activity? Do you have a fond memory of it or was it a negative experience and the thought makes you feel "bad"?

For children, competition is any activity where skills, qualities or other like characteristics are openly compared to others. The definition is broad and covers activities such as sports, music, grades in school or any other types of contests. What can parents (coaches, teachers, volunteers) do to be more assured that competitive activities will have a positive impact on a child?

Target Individual Needs

Plan to pay special attention to your child's individual needs before, during and after competition. Be involved in selecting and monitoring your child's competitive activities to make sure they meet your child's unique needs. You are the "expert" in terms of your child's individual needs. One of the most vital concerns is to make sure that your child is developmentally ready for the activity. Your child's enthusiasm for the activity will be directly related to their "readiness" for competition.

Nelson (1991) provides these recommendations for determining what activities your child is developmentally ready for:

Children 3 to 5 years old should avoid competition, they need to learn fundamental skills. Walking, running, swimming, tumbling, throwing, and catching are recommended activities. The key is to emphasize fun play.

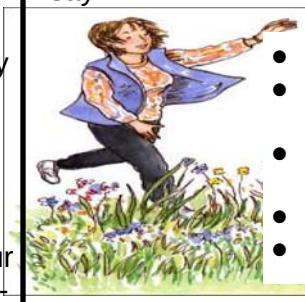
Kids aged 6 to 9 years still should have minimal emphasis on competition. Sports like swimming, running, or gymnastics can be attempted to learn the fundamental skills and work toward the transition to full competition.

At ages 10 to 12, children can compete in activities for which they have mastered the basic skills.

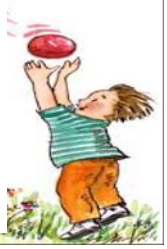
At this age most children have cognitive, social, and emotional maturity to handle modest competitive pressure.

What about older teens/young adults? By the time they are 13 or 14, young people should have mastered all skills related to the competitive activity. A parents role is to encourage continued growth and help to manage sportsmanship and other conduct related to the competition.

The most tempting questions that follow competition are related to the outcome. "Did you win?" "How did you do?" "What was the score?" Hmm, interestingly, these questions have little to do with why children stay in participating in competitive activities. What do kids say:



- **Fun**
- **Learning and improving skills**
- **Excitement, action, and challenge**
- **Team Spirit**
- **Exercise**



Ask questions that focus on the value of the activity and not just simply winning or losing. Sometimes the losing team has the most fun.

Be sure to give positive feedback. A parents positive reaction encourages greater enjoyment and positive self-esteem.

Let the fun begin- Target Individual Needs- Ask and observe the activity and give positive feedback.

References:
Barber, H., Sukhi, H., & White, S. (1999) Journal of Sport Behavior, 22(2), 162-179

Nelson, M.A. (1991). Developmental Skills and children's sports. The Physician and Sportsmedicine, 19 (2), 67-75

Facts of Life on Insurance

44 Percent of U.S. Households that either don't own life insurance and believe they should, or own insurance but believe they need more.

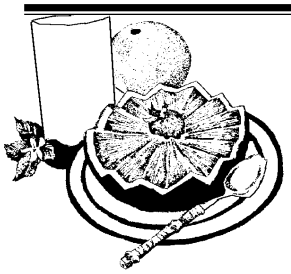
8 Number of consumers out of 10 who find it difficult to decide the type of insurance to buy and who worry about making the wrong decision.

6 Number of years of income that the average household actually has in life insurance coverage.

2.8 Number of years of income that the average household actually has in life insurance coverage.

2/3 Share of adults who believe they need more insurance but have not gotten around to buying it.

Source, LIMKA International, 2006



Breakfast . . . The Smart Way to Start The Day

Dana Tarter
County Extension Agent - Nutrition and Health

Running late and thinking about skipping breakfast? Here are five good reasons to help change that thought!

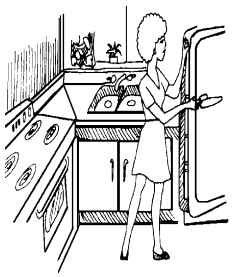
- those who eat breakfast tend to have a higher intake of nutrients especially vitamin C, calcium and folic acid;
- studies have proven than eating breakfast improves concentration and performance and that it may also help to reduce fatigue and irritability in late morning;
- preliminary research suggest that the first meal of the day may help boost metabolism, in turn creating a greater calorie burn throughout the day;
- eating breakfast may help control weight, those who eat breakfast consume less fat and calories during the rest of the day and may be better able to control snacking and overeating;
- preliminary studies show that those who ate ready – to – eat cereal for breakfast had lower overall intake of cholesterol and total fat than those who did not eat cereal or skipped breakfast all together.

Thirty years of studies show that jump starting the day with breakfast benefits all ages. Despite its benefits breakfast may be the most neglected and skipped meal of the day. Some people blame their body clock for not eating breakfast saying that "they don't feel hungry when they wake up," while others believe that skipping breakfast "helps in their weight loss goals," and for some it is a matter of time, or lack of it! Hectic morning schedules don't allow time for eating.

Breakfast, sometimes referred to as the "most important meal of the day," provides our body with energy, after eight to 12 hours without food our body needs to refuel. A supply of food produces glucose and glucose is the main energy source for our brain. Our brain doesn't store glucose so it needs a fresh supply and that early morning refueling stop provides it with the energy it needs, affording us better concentration and greater productivity throughout the day.

Does it matter what we eat for breakfast? Certainly, your breakfast meal should contribute to servings from the food groups as recommended by "MyPyramid," and it should provide you with nutrients your body needs. For instance a breakfast which includes: whole-grain cereal, milk and citrus juice can provide 100 percent of the vitamin C, 33 percent of the calcium, thiamin and riboflavin, and a good supply of fiber, iron and other nutrients for the day. Breakfast eaters usually consume more of the nutrients our bodies need while breakfast skippers may never make up the nutrients they miss without a morning meal.

Your choices for breakfast should include, whole grains, low fat milk or yogurt, lean protein, fruits and even vegetables.



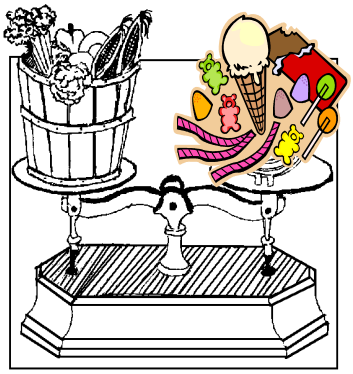
Need some quick ideas? These breakfast suggestions are sure to take you one minute or less to prepare.

- ready-to-eat cereal topped with sliced banana and yogurt
- bran muffin and yogurt topped with berries
- peanut butter on whole-wheat toast and milk
- instant oatmeal topped with raisins or grated cheese
- toasted whole-wheat waffle, topped with fruit and yogurt
- bagel topped with fruit chutney and milk, lean ham on a toasted English muffin and vegetable juice

Not ready for breakfast first thing in the morning? Try this, eat a piece of toast spread with peanut butter when you wake up and then later in the morning when you feel more like eating, have some yogurt and a piece of fruit to complete your healthy breakfast!

Who says breakfast has to be traditional? Not into cereal or waffles? Heat up leftover chicken, slice and roll it up along with some grated cheese in a whole wheat tortilla (add salsa if you like) enjoy this along with a banana and glass of milk and you have had a healthy breakfast.

If you would like more information about healthy eating, contact Texas Cooperative Extension at 817-884-1294.



The Facts About Snacks

Darlene Myatt, CFCS
Extension Agent -
Expanded Nutrition Program

Among other claims, we have become a nation of snackers in recent years. A quick look down the humongous chip, cookie and cracker aisles in our grocery stores are proof enough of the bountiful array of options from which we have to choose. Is that a bad thing?

Take this quiz by the American Dietetic Association to test your snack IQ and enhance your understanding of mini meals....

1. **People who snack often have more cavities.** True or False?
2. **Overweight people are the snackers among us.** True or False?
3. **Snacks are bad for children.** True or False?
4. **All snacks are bad.** True or False?
5. **The main problem with snacks is portion control.** True or False?
6. **Snacking when you are not hungry but because you are bored, frustrated or stressed is not a good habit.** True or False?
7. **It's a good idea to stash healthful snacks in your desk at work for days when you are too rushed to go out for lunch.** True or False?
8. **There's no such thing as a healthful snack?** True or False?

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1. **True.** People who constantly nibble have more cavities.
2. **False.** Good snack choices can help control hunger and prevent overeating at meals.
3. **False.** Some children need nutrient-dense snacks to fulfill their energy needs.
4. **False.** Choose your snacks wisely so you are not filling up on "sometimes foods" which are loaded with empty calories.
5. **True.** Some packaged snacks come two portions to a package, so you need to read nutrition labels.
6. **True.**
7. **True.** It will help you avoid vending-machine food.
8. **False.** Foods including carrots, dried fruit or nuts are just a few examples of tasty, healthful snack choices.

Kids Fest - Save The Date!


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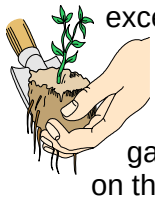
The Vital Humus: Do You Have Enough?

Steve Chaney
County Extension Agent - Horticulture

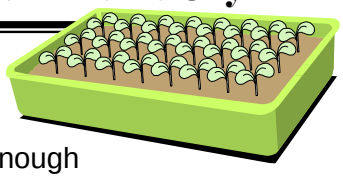
Manure, dried grass, fallen leaves, and other animal and plant refuse are the original sources of food for all plants, supplying the same macro- and micro-nutrients that modern chemical fertilizers attempt to deliver. These natural sources of plant foods offer their elements through a slow process of decay and decomposition, yielding nitrogen fertilizer along the way and *humus*, a partially decayed spongy vegetable matter, as an end result. It is this last substance, the humus, that functions like the chelated fertilizers, making plant foods available in otherwise infertile alkaline soils. Moreover, humus and the population of soil organisms it supports are the agents which over time convert sterile rock into life-supporting soil. By its very definition a *fertile soil* is a soil with an abundant presence of this partially decayed organic residue.



Humus has another role in soils, however, that exceeds in importance even its value as a long-term fertilizer. This crumby brown fresh-smelling substance familiar as the litter on the forest floor or as the end product of the gardeners compost pile acts like chemical glue on the tiny particles of clay. A sort of organic slime binds the clay minerals together into larger crumbs of soil, a process that vastly increases the availability of soil moisture and essential plant foods. With an abundant supply of humus even heavy alkaline clays remain open and friable, and thus are able to absorb erratic rains and feed them back to plants as needed. Pore space in the soil remains large and the air required by most plant roots to metabolize and absorb soil nutrients is readily available.

Take away the humus, however, and everything goes wrong. The clay particles line up shoulder to shoulder, admitting neither air nor water. Heavy spring rains puddle on the surface and run off as if the earth were an asphalt roadway. Plants struggle in the ensuing summer's drought, and leaves yellow as oxygen-starved roots fail to deliver the vital elements to the growing plants. The dying soil shrivels and contracts, forming deep cracks as it dries into lifeless adobe.

Whether a gardener chooses to use chemical fertilizers or relies on natural manures and composts, the critical message of these researchers is that calcareous soils must be fed, and fed often, in order to maintain their fertility. Few gardeners today have access to enough fresh manures and composts (or the necessary labor to spread them) to rely solely on these excellent sources of plant food. Yet without a modicum of humus even the most powerful chemical fertilizers will fight a losing battle to feed the plants in our gardens, and much of their value will be wasted, remaining locked in the alkaline clay minerals. Calcareous soils are crying for organic food; like the parents of open-mouthed nestlings, as gardeners we are charged to see they get enough.



The compost pile is one of the gardener's most reliable assets in the campaign to add organic matter to alkaline soils, and even a small garden should set aside space for this invaluable material. All manner of leaves, grass clippings, tender shoots, shredded paper, kitchen scraps, and other organic remains may be thrown on the pile. Manure or, if this is unavailable, nitrogen fertilizer may be added to speed the decay process. Some gardeners construct boxlike enclosures to house the decomposing vegetation, but all that is really needed is a reasonably well ventilated heap and patience. The best assurance of ventilation is frequent forking and turning of the pile, and in a warm climate only a few weeks or months are needed to yield the desired result: crumbly brown humus.

Since the collection of compostible debris is generally an ongoing activity, most gardeners find a second pile an asset, so that accumulation may continue while the first heap is ripening.

Gardeners can improve and build the fertility of their garden soils even more by imitating the natural cycle of plant growth and decay with the frequent addition of mulches. Covering flower beds with organic debris not only provides an *in situ* compost heap, but improves the moisture holding capacity of the earth as well. A mulch of leaves or shredded plant remains reduces the hot summer temperatures of soils, slowing down the breakdown of organic matter and encouraging the accumulation of vital humus.

Whatever the choice of mulching materials, gardeners on calcareous soil must always bear in mind this admonition: **to watch and do nothing to cover exposed bare earth constitutes an unforgivable sin, for without a renewing source of organic matter the soil will simply exhaust its supply of humus.**

Tarrant County Youth Board 2007

Cindy Bryant
County Extension Agent 4-H

Tarrant County Youth Board 2007

Research shows that when young people work with adult volunteers in a true youth-adult partnership, youth programs are more successful, leading to greater impact. Texas Cooperative Extension – Tarrant County realizes the need to promote partnerships between youth leaders and adult volunteers to better serve the needs of youth. The 2007 Tarrant County Youth Board is being formed to ensure that educational programs relevant to local needs of youth are being developed and implemented.

There are several personal rewards for serving on the Youth Board. Teens will meet like-minded youth, who have a desire to make a difference in their communities. Together, the Board will assess the needs of a community and develop plans to meet those needs. They will have an active part in providing positive opportunities for others, while strengthening your personal leadership skills.

Youth Board participants tend to possess character qualities such as responsibility, diligence, and compassion. Through service, they polish their team-building and leadership skills. Many believe these qualities strengthen an application for college, scholarships, or employment.

Teens who are interested in participating in this opportunity should contact the 4-H Department at 817-884-1553 to request an application. 4-H membership is not a requirement.

Tarrant County 4-H Clubs Centennial Year Sept. 2007 - Aug. 2008

Awesome 4-H: Serves the Arlington and East Fort Worth area, it is a homeschool only club

Countryside 4-H: Serves home school youth for Country-side Bible Church.

Edgecliffe South Tarrant: Serves the Crowley, Edgecliff, Rendon and South Tarrant area.

Eagle Mountain 4-H: Serves Saginaw & NW area of Fort Worth.

East Fort Worth 4-H: Serves East side area of Fort Worth.

Fashion Junkies 4-H: Serves HEB, Colleyville area, focus is on clothing & textile and food & nutrition project.

Horses Unlimited-4-H: Horse project club serving the Crowley area.

Keller 4-H: Serves Keller & NE Tarrant County area.

Lake Country 4-H: Serves Lake Country Christian School youth.

North Tx. Clay Breakers 4-H: Shooting sports project club serving Tarrant County area.

Northside 4-H: Serves youth of NE Tarrant Co., NRH, Watauga & Keller.

Northstar 4-H: Serves the Arlington area.

Paws a Plenty: Dog project club serving the youth of Tarrant County.

PHS 4-H: School club serving Paschal High School enrollees.

Rendon 4-H: Serves the Rendon, Arlington, Mansfield area.

South Tarrant Equestrian Program 4-H: Horse project club serving the Arlington & Mansfield area.

Saginaw 4-H: Serves the Saginaw & NW area of Tarrant County.

S.A.Y. 4-H: Serves the Mansfield, Arlington home school youth.

Southwest Christian 4-H: Serves the Benbrook area and is a school club only.

Texas Wranglers: Horse project club serving the Southlake, Grapevine area.

Ultimate 4-H & Clover Kids: Serves Clothing Kids and 4-H youth in the Benbrook area.

Westside 4-H: Serves the West area of Tarrant County.

Western Outlaws 4-H Saddle Club: Horse project club serving the Mansfield, Arlington area of Tarrant County.

Voyage 4-H: Serves the NE area of Tarrant County, NRH, Watauga & Richland Hills.

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Texas 4-H Centennial
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