



Fall Checklist

Equine Guelph provides some considerations for keeping your horse healthy and barn running smoothly as the colder months approach.



Nutrition



- Test hay for nutrient analysis & stock up before winter shortages.
- consider changes in nutritional content of pasture or hay
- Adjust turn out if needed for laminitis prone horses
- Overseeding and pasture management
- Water Access: Prepare heated buckets or tank heaters to prevent dehydration in cold weather.

Equine Wellness



- Vaccinations: Ensure fall boosters are up to date.
- Dental Exam: Schedule a float if needed—chewing efficiency is key as forage intake increases.
- Parasite Control: Review your deworming strategy with your vet
- Saddle Fit Check: Did your horse gain muscle over summer training? Now's the time to reassess saddle fit to prevent pain and discomfort.
- Monitor for & take measures to prevent mud fever
- Body Condition Scoring: Monitor weight and slowly adjust feed, if needed before winter sets in.

Senior Horse - Quality of Life Assessment

Fall is a good time to reflect on your senior horse's comfort, health, and happiness

- Schedule a wellness exam to monitor weight, dental health, and metabolic conditions like PPID or insulin resistance.
- Pain recognition and questions for your vet
- Cooler weather can aggravate arthritis and stiffness. Watch for changes in movement, reluctance to lie down, or difficulty rising.



Interest in learning more?

Check out the interactive [Senior Horse Challenge](#) healthcare tool and register for the Senior Horse course at TheHorsePortal.ca

Take Stock, Tidy, Repair & Prepare

- Round up any combustibles like paint cans from summer projects and store safely away from the barn
- Check fire extinguishers: Make sure they're charged and accessible; fall is a good time for a general safety audit.
- Replace light bulbs and check wiring
- Restock first aid kit
- Blankets: Wash, repair, label and purchase as needed
- Deep clean, dismantle and inspect tack for wear. Send for repairs if needed.
- Rodent Control: Seal feed bins and check for signs of pests.
- Give the hay storage area a good sweep and organize feed room: rotate stock, clean bins, and ensure feed and hay are stored off the ground and away from moisture.
- Ensure automatic waterers are functioning properly and prepare for freezing temps with insulation or heaters.
- Walk fence lines and repair any broken boards and posts before the ground freezes.
- Check trees for signs of disease, remove dead limbs and trim branches overhanging gates and entrance ways.
- Mitigate mud: Install gravel or mats in high-traffic areas to prevent slippery footing and hoof issues, direct water flow, create sacrifice areas...