

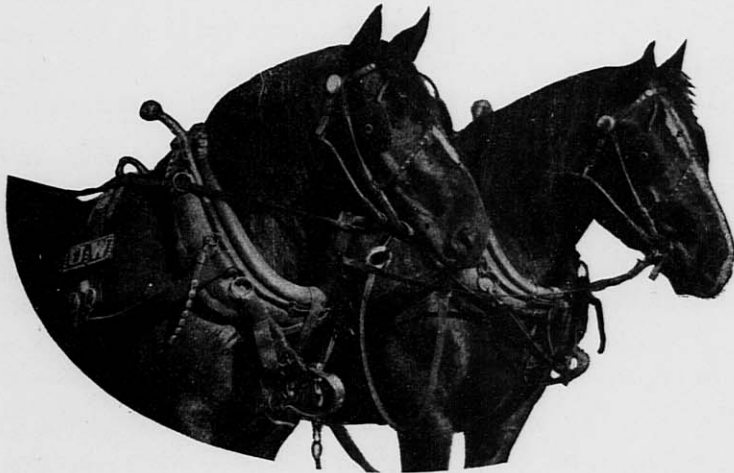
WISCONSIN BANKERS' FARM BULLETIN

THE WORK HORSE IN SPRING

BY

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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN,
SECRETARY, WISCONSIN HORSE BREEDERS'
ASSOCIATION



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WISCONSIN

THE WORK HORSE IN SPRING

BY J. G. FULLER

SECRETARY, WISCONSIN HORSE BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION

College of Agriculture, University of Wisconsin.

The work horse is the Wisconsin farmer's best pulling power and he is a most important factor in the spring work of the farm. With a good system of crop rotation and his field operations well planned, the farmer should know just about how much horse work he has to do and early provide himself with horses sufficient for his tasks.

He should select a type of horse suited to his work. If he has a farm of heavy soil and is producing cultivated crops, large and strong draft horses will be most efficient.

Heavy Horses On a small dairy farm where much produce
for Heavy Work. and feed has to be hauled to and from the
farm, a smaller, more active type of horse
will be most useful.

Whatever the type of horse or work to be done, do not put him into hard work without preparation. Work horses after being kept over winter on a maintenance ration
Horses "Soft" of suitable feed, such as corn stover, hay, straw
in Spring. and a limited amount of grain, should gradually
be placed upon a ration of energy producing
feeds. It takes at least three weeks to get in shape for steady
field work a horse that has been more or less idle during the winter.
During this time he should be more liberally fed and by thorough
grooming be induced to shed as much as possible of his winter
coat of hair.

Systematic attention and intelligent feeding are the essential facts in successfully handling the work horse. If possible, give him a drink the first thing in the morning, say at 5 a. m., and follow this with the grain ration and a limited amount of hay. Let him have another drink on the way out of the stable at 6 or 7 a. m., and, if not too warm, on entering the stable at noon and again at night.

A variety of feed is important for the hard worked horse. A grain mixture of nine parts of oats and one part of bran, by weight, is an excellent combination. The horse should be fed from four to seven quarts of this mixture three times per day, the amount depending upon the size of the horse and the character of his work. In addition, two to four ears of corn can be fed. On idle days the ration should be cut down about one-third in bulk and the grain mixture changed to seven parts of oats and three parts of bran with only one-half as much corn or none at all.

The work horse should be given, daily, from fourteen to eighteen pounds of good hay, preferably timothy. Good clover or alfalfa hay, if fed, should be mixed with about one-fourth part clean straw to counteract the loosening effect. About two-thirds of the hay should be fed at night and one-third in the morning, feeding little if any hay at noon.

The work horse is never groomed too much. Thorough grooming is as important for the health and condition of the work horse as is a bath for a hard working man. As far as possible, all dirt should be removed from the inner side of the harness and collar. At the beginning of the season the shoulders will be toughened by being bathed each evening in a solution of cold salt water.

Farm work horses need not be shod except perhaps during the dry summer weather, but their feet should be rounded by

means of a rasp and kept from splitting or getting out of shape so that their efficiency is in no way lessened.

SOME DON'TS FOR HUMANITY'S SAKE.

Don't forget to give the work horse a few short rests on hot days and lift his collar to cool the neck and shoulders.

Don't cut off his forelock of hair or the mane under the collar; they are there for protection.

Don't give a warm horse a drink of cold water nor wash a horse with cold water.

Don't feed a hard worked horse on silage.

Don't forget to give him his weekly allowance of salt.

Don't forget that the horse's teeth may need attention if he fails to eat properly and is in poor condition.

Don't fail to have the harness fit; it means service and comfort to the animal.



These bulletins are prepared by the men of the College of Agriculture of the University of Wisconsin who are considered the best authorities in the United States on the various subjects treated

The banks distributing them are sending them out in hopes that they will prove interesting and profitable to their customers and it is their intention to place a copy in the hands of everyone who is interested. Please notify the distributing bank if you want the bulletins and are not already receiving them.

It is the purpose of the banks to assist their customers whenever possible in increasing farm profits and farm conditions and any suggestions that may be offered will be welcomed.

Subject for April Bulletin: "Good Roads and How to Get Them"