Tips for Fall

Prep for Cold Weather

Fall is often the most enjoyable season in Oklahoma. The heat is dissipating, there may still be warm days, but the cooler nights can be refreshing. Fall days can be ideal riding weather. Nothing like a cool day to energize ourselves and decrease the bugs making it perfect for a good ride.

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Many horses can maintain their ideal body condition score (BCS) on grass alone and may require no blanket. The best way to maintain a healthy weight is with diet. The same shelter that protects our horses from the heat of the sun in summer is between 45 and 60 square feet per horse and may lie ahead.

Tips for Fall

1. Provide adequate fresh grass in the fall for your horses. Be prepared for the change in season.
2. Plan to bring in the horses when the weather becomes colder. Many horses can maintain their BCS on grass alone as the cooler days begin.
3. Most healthy horses do not require a blanket during the winter. If you continue to have cold nights, use blankets to help your horses remain comfortable.
4. When you do use blankets, make sure they are light enough to move the body heat they are designed to help retain. A heavy blanket can cause heat stress.
5. Increase the forage offered to your horses to help them maintain their weight.
6. Provide them with clean, fresh water. Clean fresh water is essential for the health of your horses. In addition, grass is a good source of water but as the horses look to a diet of hay or other feed, substantial amounts of water may be required. Be prepared to provide water to your horses.
7. Provide fresh grass to your horses. In addition to providing fresh grass, be prepared to provide clean, fresh water.
8. Provide a breakfast of fresh grass and a dinner of hay. This is a simple way to ensure your horses are getting the nutrition they need.
9. Keep an eye on your horses’ weight. Many horses can maintain their ideal BCS on grass alone as the cooler days begin.
10. Be prepared to provide fresh grass to your horses. This is a simple way to ensure your horses are getting the nutrition they need.

About the Authors

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Most importantly, get out and enjoy the beautiful fall landscape in Oklahoma. Remember that your older horses are the ones that often find winter to be the most challenging with the common goal of delivering the highest possible standard of compassionate geriatric care.

Tips for Fall

Make sure you either have a reliable delivery source of bedding, or choose to get enough to last for 6 months. Each horse should have around 3300 pounds of bedding to last 6 months or 5000 pounds to last 6 months for the average alert horse. If you keep your horses inside during the winter, you may need to consider bedding to keep them dry and warm in their stalls. Some may prefer to use a combination of straw, rice hulls, or other absorbent material. Provide dry bedding to your horses at least once per day.

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