



# NEWS LINE

For release February 12, 2009

## Horse owners reminded not to rely on snow for water Reports of horses in distress and seizures down

Horses on pasture require special attention at this time of the year. Because of increased snow coverage in many parts of the province there have been reports of horses with lacerations to their hoof area, and in particular around the bulb and fetlock area, when the animals try to break through snow crusts to reach a food supply. Bill desBarres (pro. de bar) of the Alberta Equestrian Federation, the Alberta Equine Welfare Group and Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) urges owners to maintain a close watch on horses on pasture.

“We’re very proud of our Alberta equine community for the care that they take of their horses. Reports of animals in distress are down this winter. Seizures are also down.”

desBarres says there are always a couple of issues. One is a water source for horses on pasture. “I would encourage everybody to make sure horses have water. Horses don’t survive well using snow in place of water - especially when you have a long winter with a cold spring you’re going to find that the horses need a little better access to water. Also, when it’s extremely cost the usual 25 pounds of feed is not enough. The average light horse needs 30 - 35 pounds.”

desBarres credits increased awareness for a reduction in reports of animals in distress and seizures. “I think that our education programs and the fact that we have the ALERT line - people are looking over their shoulder a little bit. I hope that because we’d like to know when there are horses in distress they’re going to be reported to the ALERT line at 1-800-506-2273, and then of course, the horse community will send somebody out to confirm whether or not the horses are indeed in some sort of distress because of lack of feed, injury, lack of water or whatever.”

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AFAC scripts and clips are also available at [www.afac.ab.ca](http://www.afac.ab.ca)

### **Clip No. 1:**

Horses on pasture require special attention at this time of the year, especially when the animals try to break through snow crusts to reach a food supply. Bill desBarres (pro. de bar) is with the Alberta Equestrian Federation, the Alberta Equine Welfare Group and Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC):  
(19... “snow.”)

### **Clip No. 2:**

desBarres says he is very proud of the Alberta equine community for the care that they provide their horses, pointing out that reports of animals in distress and seizures are down this winter but adds there are always a couple of concerns:  
(24... “winter.”)

### **Clip No. 3:**

DesBarres believes people are becoming more aware of the need to provide proper care of their animals:  
(29... “water.”)

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**Animal Care is Everyone’s Responsibility.**