

November 29, 2011

## Important tips to reduce stress when weaning foals

There are a number of important points to keep in mind when weaning foals. Dr. Darrell Dalton, Deputy Registrar for the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, says this includes the age of the foal. “We know that a mare’s milk is no longer adequate to sustain the foal after four months of age, so we would like foals weaned by four months of age. It’s also nice if we can have them on a creep ration prior to weaning. Then, it’s not such a sudden change for them at the time of weaning.”

There’s also a benefit if weaning takes place in groups of two, or more. Dr. Dalton says it’s has been noticed this procedure is a lot less stressful on foals than weaning them individually.

When to vaccinate is a question that often arises. “Vaccinating foals certainly is something that owners should talk to their veterinarians about. We know that most foals are not able to respond to vaccination prior to four months of age,” adds Dalton.

He says veterinarians can recommend what vaccinations are recommended for the area. They can also advise whether to vaccinate prior to weaning or wait until later.

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

This is the time of the year when many horse owners wean their foals. For best results Dr. Darrell Dalton, Alberta Veterinary Medical Association Deputy Registrar, says there are a number of points to keep in mind:

(18... “weaning.”)

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

Dalton says weaning foals in groups reduces stress:

(14... “group.”)

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

Dalton suggests horse owners should talk to their veterinarians to determine the best time to vaccinate foals:

(15... “choice.”)

This story is brought to you by Alberta Farm Animal Care in partnership with the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association.

**For further information contact: Lorna Baird, Executive Director (403) 662-8050**