

DUST FREE MANAGEMENT

Your horse has been diagnosed with a condition that requires dust free management. Dust free management is essential for all horses suffering from respiratory conditions. It is important to understand that many short-term respiratory conditions will result in dust allergy if dust free management is not practised as the airways are very sensitive at this time and for several weeks afterwards.

HORSES WITH ALLERGIC AIRWAY DISEASE ARE HYPERSENSITIVE TO DUSTS, POLLENS, SPORES AND POLLUTANTS. EVEN A SMALL AMOUNT OF THESE SUBSTANCES CAN INITIATE A RESPIRATORY ATTACK.

1. PLENTY OF FRESH AIR! IF IN DOUBT . . . KEEP OUT!

- **Always** have the horse out when mucking out and sweeping the yard and for 1 hour afterwards.
- **Always** groom the horse out of the box.
- **Always** abide by the rules below in the field! Do not feed dry hay at grass and keep the inside of the field shelter in the same way as you keep the stable. Clear up old fodder and never use straw.

2. DON'T FEED DUST!

- **If possible** do not feed hay. If hay is to be fed it should **always** be soaked, fully submerged in clean water for between 30 mins and 2 hrs and fed wet, immediately after soaking. Soaking overnight leeches out valuable nutrients and should be avoided unless your horse is overweight when it can be a useful part of a reduced energy diet. Wetting or steaming does very little!
- **If possible** change the horse onto haylage, dust free chaff and high fibre cubes.
- **Never** use dusty or mouldy feed. Damp down the bucket feed to avoid dust.
- **Always** feed both fodder and hard feed in bins on the floor. This avoids the bedding getting wet from soaked hay and encourages the drainage of respiratory secretions from the horse's airways.

3. USE LOW DUST BEDDING

- **NEVER USE STRAW.**
- **Always** use shavings, shredded hemp (e.g. Aubiose), paper or cardboard. Rubber mats with a very thin layer of bedding can also be used.
- **Never** use a deep litter system.
- **Always** keep the bedding clean and dry and turn it all over daily. This is particularly important if banks are used as these can support mould growth if left undisturbed.

4. THINK ABOUT THE STABLE ENVIRONMENT

- **Ensure** that the stable and yard have good drainage.
- **Ensure** that neighbouring horses are kept in the same way. This is particularly important in barns.
- **Never** store hay or straw near the horse and keep them down wind.
- **Never** site the dung heap near the horse and site it down wind.
- **Always** increase stable ventilation. If possible have ventilation at the back of the stable, above the horses head. (This may involve knocking out some bricks!)
- **Always** keep the stable dusted and impeccably clean!

5. AND WHEN TRAVELLING OR AWAY

- **Never** hang a hay net in front of the horse when travelling.
- **Always** ensure that all the rules at home are followed when away at events!