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Horses have been reproducing themselves for thousands of years just fine so what's the big deal? Well, most modern horses no longer run free on thousands of acres playing catch-as-catch-can between the stallions and the mares. Today we tend to breed for very specific skills, body type and even color.

We bred AQHA horses for 40 years, and, with our last stallion, Big Mac Tivio, we had a very successful mom & pop, live-cover stud operation for twelve. In all that time, we learned a tremendous amount on how to handle both our own and forty-plus incoming mares per season safely and successfully; we learned how to handle a stallion with all sorts of mares up to three times per day; and we learned what mare owners were looking for and the reality of what was available and what they found.

Overall, breeding horses can be a very enjoyable and rewarding endeavor albeit sometimes frustrating and expensive as well. Hopefully this overview may enable you to make wise choices if breeding becomes a viable option for you.

The MARE

So you have a mare and you want a baby. While almost all mares CAN be bred, not all mares SHOULD be bred. Most serious breeders understand that while a mare biologically contributes 50% of the genetic material of the foal, she actually influences it about 70%. Remember the foal is formed from and carried within her body for 11 months and then is with her 24/7 for another 5-6 months. We believe that only good mares who can actually contribute to the betterment of the breed should ever be bred at all. Among mare attributes to consider before breeding are . . .

Temperament—regardless of any other qualities, we believe temperament to be paramount: a nasty, vicious mare, or a fearful, timid one, can most definitely pass those same qualities along to her foal. It is our opinion that regardless of conformation or athleticism, neither a vicious nor a fearful mare should ever be bred—her babies will too frequently end up in a can.

Health—trying to breed an underweight, ancient, or injured mare just to make her “worth” throwing hay to is totally counter-productive in our view. We learned to reserve the right to refuse a mare coming in for breeding; sometimes this was in direct contraindication of the vet reproduction report. The mare may have had 2 ovaries in reasonable tone and a uterus slung between them, but when we observed poor coat and hoof condition, visible ribs, dead eyes, low vitality, etc., such mares were sent home to be put on the **DYNAMITE** program if the owners were willing. An unhealthy dam cannot possibly produce a healthy foal.

Nutrition—for the last 8 years of Mac's standing at stud, we were booking over 40+ mares per season. That adds up to a lot of mares and we can assure you that every single one left our place looking better than when she arrived. We strongly urge all mare owners to start a pre-gestational nutritional program (virtually free choice grass hay and the **DYNAMITE** supplements of the 4 **Free Choice Minerals** plus **DYNAMITE Regular** and **Breeder Pac**; NO sweet feeds, etc. [HORSE FAQ:FOAL FEEDING]) preferably at least ONE YEAR PRIOR to breeding to ensure optimum mare and foal health. However, even four months prior will at least allow the nutrients to positively affect the blood, and at the very least, at the time of actual breeding is certainly better than never since the brain and skeletal structure of the foal are formed in the first three months of pregnancy. While **DYNAMITE** nutrition cannot make “a silk purse out of a sow's ear,” it most certainly can and does allow for full genetic potential to be realized; we have observed this happening time after time.

Conformation—let's face it, there is no such thing as an absolutely perfect horse, but a broodmare definitely needs to have some solid conformation going for her. Regardless of breed differences, and without going into all the fine points of conformation or how many forehead whorls she has, broodmares should be overall pleasing to the eye in balance and form, have sound legs and feet, good mouth formation (no parrot mouths, etc.), and a “good eye” (denoting a sound temperament more than physical roundness, largeness, or lack of bugginess or seeing white all around the iris). The stallion can be chosen to be strong in the areas where she may need some boosting, and vice-versa, but no stallion can make up for truly

poor mare conformation.

Pedigree—knowing the genetics of a mare is very important and we always looked for “deep” pedigrees where virtually all the names are proven to have good attributes of not only performance, but also health, temperament and longevity. Problems can arise when the animal in front of your face is not in and of itself a good representative of perhaps an excellent pedigree. As always, balance between pedigree and the individual is necessary rather than just breeding pedigree to pedigree no matter how exalted. Likewise, an outstanding animal with a so-so pedigree may be unable to pass that excellence along.

Performance—many individuals breed on the basis of performance alone without regard to temperament, health or overall longevity. We have seen mares needled heavily in order to perform but we believe this can be an indication that their actual genetic structure is weak. Also, heavily medicated mares frequently are very unhealthy due to liver toxicity. Indeed, many will not even cycle properly, especially those performance mares who have had hormone therapy to control or eliminate heats. For such mares, we have seen even one year on the previously described **DYNAMITE** basic nutritional program including **Breeder Pac** work wonders.

Color—while this can certainly be the icing on the cake, it should never take precedence over any other considerations. This is coming from a former breeding farm standing a buckskin stallion at stud! Granted, many would not have come to see Mac without his color, but they stayed because he was so impressive in his looks, balance, athleticism, pedigree, vigor, aura and his incredible get regardless of color. Unfortunately, far too many owners propagate terrible conformation or temperament for the sake of color alone; the get end up far too frequently in pet food cans.

The STALLION

Essentially the same rules apply for the stallion although when we bred to outside studs we always looked for that indefinable quality that sets an exceptional animal aside from simply having trophies and gonads. We call it presence, or aura, and it can just about knock you off your feet with some of these guys. That is what Mac had and still has in spite of the fact that we are now all retired from horse breeding. We saw people time and again literally step back with dropped jaws as this powerful yet mannerly fellow moved toward them in greeting. Then, at a word from John, he would race down his long, huge pen to his private round ring in which he would strut his stuff, showing off all his considerable assets, and yet be gentle enough to let little kids climb on him.

Choose *your* stallion wisely considering temperament, pedigree, soundness, and conformation similar to although strengthening your mare's weaknesses, but also look for that special vim, vigor and vitality. Equally important, look very carefully at how his babies turn out.

SPERM QUALITY

There is definitely a plethora of anecdotal evidence that horses raised chemical-free and utilizing the **DYNAMITE** nutritional program have more vigorous sperm. Mac could just about impregnate a mare by winking at her! When a friend tested, as a part of his Ph.D. study, the sperm derived from the testicles of a **DYNAMITE**-raised 4 yr old we gelded, he could not believe the vitality even after a weekend of straight refrigeration with no preparation. Recently University of Missouri researchers found definite reductions in vigor, count, shape and motility in *humans* living in farming areas in both Missouri and Iowa and they are suspecting agricultural chemicals as the culprit. While certainly not a clear analog to equines, it is suspicious enough for us to totally avoid any of the popular chemicals in use for horses including wormers and vaccines in addition to the chemicals in standard feeds.

FOAL GENDER

Most of us just take our chances with the gender of the resultant foal. However, if you would like a better chance of getting what you want, here are some ideas to consider:

In the British Isles, sheepmen claimed they got more female lambs when the ewes faced south for breeding. In our breeding pro-

gram, all mares faced south yet we had a pretty even distribution of boys to girls perhaps because of other factors such as . . .

. . . the actual timing of breeding. With AI, most vets wait right up to ovulation to breed. Since male sperm swim faster than female sperm, this tends to result in more colts being born in AI situations. This is great if you are after a future stud prospect or a number of geldings. In order to arrive at fillies or future broodmares, some breeders will live cover on the third day of the heat and that's it. Theoretically and anecdotally, this results in more fillies since the sperm which produces females tends to live longer.

A third consideration is the mare's pH. Just as with humans, a slightly acidic uterine environment favors female sperm, while male sperm favor a slightly alkaline one. One approach to this has been to douche with either apple cider vinegar (3 oz/pint of water 2 days before ovulation) for fillies or baking soda (2 oz/ quart or use a couple of prepared human douches; just a couple of hours prior to breeding) for colts. Some people simply feed the **ACV** to the mare by adding ¼ to ½ cup a day, starting a couple of weeks before breeding, directly onto the feed. Most mares like the taste and eat it readily.

MARE & FOAL MANAGEMENT

It is always distressing for a mare to move to a breeding farm either just before or just after foaling. It is hard enough emotionally for dry mares, or any horse for that matter, to move from its familiar space at any time, but around parturition (birthing) is when a mare feels, and is, most vulnerable. Make sure her confinement area is large enough to safely house both mare and foal (a minimum of 16' on a side for an "average" sized mare) and that she has enough solid walls around her that she will not feel she has to fight off strangers. [HORSE FAQ:FOALING]

Observe the current residents when you are inspecting a prospective breeding farm; see if the mares seem reasonably content rather than stunned, drugged or super-anxious. Make sure they all appear in good flesh and well cared for. Listen for raised voices in handlers which can indicate a short temper rather than the extreme patience called for in horse handling. See how the handlers approach various mares and how they lead them to their assignments; are they jerking the horse around or moving forward in a confident, quiet manner?

In an effort to ease the mares' transition from home to breeder, we requested that all mares arrive at our farm just following a heat cycle. This allowed them time to relax and get used to the new routines so they would maintain their cycles properly. Time and again we witnessed anxiety actually stop a mare from cycling regardless of vet and ultra-sound prognostications. Of course most breeding managers would just go ahead and give hormone injections to "short-cycle" such a mare, but if you have ever witnessed the sweats, tremors, cramps, etc. resulting from such practices, you may understand why we wished to avoid it as a routine answer. Far better to let Mother Nature take her course.

The FACILITY

Since you will be sending your precious mare to a breeding farm, their physical facility should be of serious concern. Very obviously, it should be clean with safe fencing. Barbed wire should be nowhere in sight, while any electric fencing should be either cable or band rather than fine wire. All woven fencing should have small enough openings that hooves cannot penetrate and rail fencing should be low enough to the ground (within 6 inches) so that a baby cannot roll under and out. Strange mares should never be put into a corral/paddock with each other but should be contained separately; very large pastures may work but mares *will* fuss to determine dominance and you do not want an injured mare.

There should also ideally be separate areas for "dry" (open or unbred) mares and for "wet" (with foal at side) mares as each has different needs as to size of containment area, feed, handling and observance. Many mare owners choose to have their mares foal out at the breeding facility to avoid trailering newborns. If this is true for you, carefully examine the foaling area and management, also. When taken out for teasing or breeding, mares with babies need 2 handlers: one for mom and one for baby so that it does not dart into danger. The teasing/breeding area itself should have a space very close to mom where the baby can be safely contained while she is about her business of breeding. Many new mothers can be absolutely frantic about their offspring, so their fears should be allayed as quickly and sanely as possible. As a **DYNAMITE** facility, we always

gave anxious mares plenty of homeopathic **Relax**; it worked like a charm.

Let's you think such cautions are unnecessary, we ourselves witnessed, at a top-notch national-level facility, a foal screaming for its mother while dozens of "helpers" scurried around utterly ignoring the little fellow while it's mother, still penned, was working herself into a frenzy. Obviously the foal had rolled under the rather high enclosure but could not get back in to mom. Another time, at this same facility, a couple paid to have their mare foaled out under supervision in her own foaling stall which included on-site 24 hr/day vet/video observation. The owners came the next day to visit and found their mare packed in a corral with over a dozen other mares and bleeding copiously. Apparently she had gotten into a fuss with a shod mare who kicked her in the vulva; the severe and deep gash required surgical repair.

Also, check out their hay to see what it looks like and how it is stored. Find out how they feed it and how much they feed. In fact, make sure their feed program is commensurate with yours; if not, ask if you can supply your own and then follow up to be sure they are actually feeding it.

COURTSHIP/TEASING

In natural settings, a stallion dances and prances and nuzzles and nibbles to woo the mare whose pheromones are tickling his senses. Such foreplay stimulates the mare's hormones so the two can at last come together in harmony. Some people contend that the stallion actually nibbles at meridian reproduction points thus stimulating them. In restricted modern breeding, normally we cannot allow full foreplay, but all can, and we certainly did, encourage good teasing behavior of both stallion and mare. Proper teasing is an art learned by handling numerous animals and remaining observant at all times. We have learned that the prestigious and nearby CSU itself does not provide the opportunity of learning proper teasing behavior, but perhaps this is true of most modern equine education. If so, this is very sad as we believe such courtship it is an essential component in successful breeding. Even in AI situations, proper teasing will definitely aid a mare's receptivity and settling ability. Wise handlers have learned to both observe and to listen carefully to the teasing stallion who knows far better than almost any vet/ultra-sound combo just when a mare is ready to be covered.

Mac's space was upwind of the mares and separated by a 16' alleyway yet open to view and odor so stallion and mares could all recognize each other. Our teasing area was a part of Mac's run that we boarded in solidly with very thick timber on the inside. John left about a foot of space open where Mac could get his muzzle through and gently mouth the mare's body and butt if she so allowed. John would lead the mare to the area watching her response the whole time. If both seemed unconcerned, he would take her back to her individual run. However, if Mac initiated courting behavior, including sounds, then John would simply stand there with the mare even if she was not responding immediately. Some mares are rather "shy" with many maidens taking up to 20 minutes or more to finally acknowledge that Mac's response was appropriate and to "let down their hair" and start to sidle up to him. Others pretty much led John to the teasing area, turned their butts to Mac, squatted down and were ready to rumble immediately. The first are what is known as "silent" heats, while the others are known to many mare owners as "sluts!" In reality, they are simply good healthy animals with absolutely no hormone problems. Even mares with babies felt totally safe with our arrangements.

SERVICING & SETTLING

When breeding horses, the actual coupling is termed "servicing" while the term "settled" indicates that a mare is proven in foal. Most breeding facilities, including nearby CSU, have a "settling" rate of around 70-75% with an 80% rate being considered very high. Our rate was about 95-98% which included Mac being used up to three times per day, live cover, during the very busy season.

While we have no scientific answers for this incredible rate, we do surmise much of it had to do with Mac's vitality due to both his genetics and his **DYNAMITE** nutritional program. Another reason could be due to the fact that we actually did turn away mares we considered unhealthy. Of course we also had that active teasing program in place, plus Mac's proximity, thus encouraging full mare participation which most definitely can make a discernable and welcome difference in settling successes. Also, all mares "liked" Mac with none ever refusing him due to color, attitude, pheromones, or whatever.

In years past, breeders used to just do the job and let nature take

its course. Some of the more professional facilities had the mares internally palpated while others used teasing methods to see if the mare wanted the stallion; we did both. Over the course of our many years of breeding, we have seen each method fail: good vets declaring a mare open when in a few months she had a new baby at her side and mares in foal still accepting stallion attentions even into late pregnancy.

In the twenty-first century, however, the most efficient way of telling if a mare is truly in foal or not is via properly used UltraSound. Most vets can u/s on the fourteenth day to determine if a mare is in foal; some exceptional vets can tell at 12-13 days while others require about 15-16 days. Such specific and early timing allows a mare to be bred again shortly, if necessary, without missing a heat cycle.

Even if a mare is declared in foal, some owners choose to u/s again around 45 days to 3 months in order to test for resorption or twins. Resorption can occur with either unhealthy mares or abnormal fetuses while twinning in horses generally results in premature birth. With u/s, the lesser twin can be literally "pinched" off so it does not compromise the pregnancy. Of course, some people maintain that pinching is unnecessary since the mare herself will generally delete the extra foal and that the perils of u/s outweigh the rare possibility of twins. It is our belief that frequent u/s can be of questionable value and may even have a deleterious effect on a fetus causing many of the very problems they are supposed to deter; the machine uses sonar similar to radar and in early pregnancy, the fetuses are very fluid. However, u/s can also be a valuable tool if used wisely rather than with our current apparent over-dependence on the technology.

CHUTES AND HOBBLER

No, chutes and hobbles are not "natural" but then very little about hand-breeding is and we primarily have to look after the health and safety of all concerned: mare, baby, stallion and, of course, the handlers. After all, we are dealing with very large amorous beasts, most of whom are not our own. Even mares with the best of temperaments who have given every indication of being totally ready and eager for breeding, can sometimes be a surprise. Maybe a horse fly bit her or she caught sight of something worrying to her or whatever. We always felt it was far better to anticipate and avoid all possible wrecks by careful planning rather than to have an actual wreck with which to deal.

John designed our very stout and safe breeding chute which could also be used for vet palpation and u/s. It allowed the mare to have what she felt was a safe space and where she could be safely tied if necessary. Also where anyone working with her, such as tail wrapping before each cover or washing off after her last cover, was safe from those nasty little side "cow-kicks" with which many mares are prone to surprising unsuspecting handlers. More importantly, it allowed Mac to come to the mare naturally from the side (which is how experienced stallions prefer) without the mare dancing around and perhaps causing danger to someone. We never considered charging a "chute fee" since we took for granted that a chute was essential for safe, proper mare handling and would never consider hand breeding a mare without one.

We also believe proper breeding hobbles are necessary to safeguard the stallion from some wicked hind kicks. We know of one stallion emasculated by a mare in full heat with whom he had just coupled with her total cooperation in a pasture situation. Proper hobbles avoid any possibility of this occurring. Breeding hobbles, at least the ones we used, are made of thick leather; some have sheepskin padding. The cuffs fit gently around each hind leg above the fetlock while a pulley system allows the mare to move and even walk at will but she cannot raise those legs more than 12 inches or so off the ground. The old "scotch" hobble, whereby a front leg is pulled and tied up, we believe to be very cruel and dangerous; the mare cannot possibly stand square and solid under the stallion's weight. John, in his early years, witnessed a number of mares take terrible falls under such conditions and determined he would never handle a mare so unconsciously. As to all those mare owners who said their mare had never been hobbled, John never once had any difficulty with putting them on any mare except for one of our own who was a very tricky breeder; even she became used to them after a couple of learning sessions.

There are some successful small breeders who pasture-breed at least their own stock. This is admirable as long as the pasture itself is securely fenced (in Colorado, all stallions are justly required to be behind 6' fencing) and that there is no possibility of other stallions or mares coming

alongside. In such pasture situations, all the horses have learned proper equine herd breeding behavior. Throwing untutored stock together can result in tragedy.

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

Live cover is obviously the most "natural" way to go, but some breeds, like warmbloods, do not even allow it since there are dangers, aside from infections, to both mare and stallion. Another benefit of AI is no shipping of mare and foal, only the semen. However, there are also some special considerations.

AI includes fresh cooled and frozen semen. If you are using frozen, make sure that particular stallion has semen which can withstand such rigors; many cannot and their insemination rates are very low. Eighty-five percent is considered a very high rate of AI pregnancy especially with frozen semen. Many *DYNAMITE* breeders have found that "*DYNAMITE* semen" seems to be far stronger than average.

After collection, unless a few mares are right there waiting as in some large Thoroughbred breeding farms, the semen is mixed with various extender fluids and generally placed in "straws" for shipping. The extenders themselves are supposed to be reaction-free, but we have heard of numerous mares being unable to conceive via AI unless such extenders, which can include anti-biotics, are eliminated. Some facilities, especially those utilizing fresh-cooled, may be willing and able to comply with such a request but most probably cannot.

There also tends to be what we would perceive as an overabundance of both palpation and u/s of mares and not near enough teasing. We have heard of small breeders with a few mares learning how, and purchasing the necessary equipment, to perform the AI procedures themselves in order to avoid as much excess interference as possible. Even though such small breeders generally do not have a stallion on hand for teasing, they allow the mares to sort of tease themselves and some even have an amorous gelding on hand who can help stimulate and then notify when the mare is ready. Such a development can also keep costs in line.

Of course some mares are simply "allergic" to some stallion semen but this could also happen with live cover. If this is the case, then a different stallion is the only possibility.

The COSTS

When shopping for a stallion, most individuals look only at the stud fee. This fee is really only the start of breeding costs arrived at from a process of not only what fee the market might bear, but also taking into consideration the cost of the breeding farm/stallion station's facility, insurance, handlers, showing/competing, and so on and so forth. Many "hidden" costs at the breeding farm!

Next of course come mare costs including transporting her to the breeding facility especially if out-of-state. Then there is the per diem charge for boarding her. Again, this is not normally a figure pulled out of a hat but entails the responsibility, including appropriate insurance, for caring for someone else's horse. If you require her to foal out at the facility to avoid transporting a newborn, there are usually extra charges incurred including vet visits. If your mare misses settling, it can mean another 2-3 weeks of boarding fees accruing. There are frequently higher costs involved in boarding "wet" mares as opposed to "dry" mares, and rightly so; much higher responsibility with foals plus more handlers involved.

For those breeds, such as AQHA, which allow shipped semen, a mare owner can conserve on mare care by utilizing AI (artificial insemination), but there will still be timing, picking the semen up at the nearest airport, vet fees for u/s and insemination, etc.

Another mare cost which most individuals forget about is the fact that a pregnant mare needs to be nurtured a little differently than a riding or, even more so, a competitive mount. Working mares need to be released from most duties at least 4 months before and after foaling; naturally this could be extended to 6 months if possible. And, as with pregnant humans, broodmares also need nurturing in the nutrition department. We have witnessed far too many bony broodmares; in fact it is common enough that some people take it for granted. This is healthy neither for mom nor baby. Nor is being obese. Optimum nutrition and sufficient calories, especially once she starts lactating, are essential for the long-term health of both [HORSE FAQ:FOAL FEEDING]. Even if the foal is being sold after weaning, there is still the question of safe and sound weaning pens, etc. Also, for valuable show or competition mares, many owners prefer to take

out special insurance on her during this time.

VETTING

This is an area in which costs can rise sharply from vetting her out before breeding to all the common veterinarian practices involved in the actual breeding process.

In our opinion, any vaccinations [HORSE BASICS: VACCINES] which an owner chooses to give a broodmare should be completed about a month before taking her to the stud, but none should be given during pregnancy itself. Dr Ronald Schultz, immunologist at the University of Wisconsin, concurs, suggesting never giving even rhino shots to a pregnant mare, but only before breeding. Most vets put pregnant mares through quite a series of rhino shots to avoid possible abortions due to the equine form of herpes. We have personally witnessed three instances, and heard of dozens more, of mares aborting/miscarrying their fetuses after the second vaccination. Many think it is because this vaccine is grown on nerve culture and can in fact, cause serious, long-term neurological damage which we have also witnessed. Interestingly, modern research is showing evidence of rhino vaccines in every single case of photic head shaking [HORSE FAQ: PHOTIC HEADSHAKING]. Healthy horses are exposed to flu and rhino all the time since the bacteria are air-borne; in barns, they are exposed by the vaccinated horses themselves. It is our belief that such natural immunity is far more effective than anything we can artificially produce.

Another vaccine whose use we especially question during pregnancy is the West Nile Virus vaccine, also grown on nerve tissue. The appalling number of aborted pregnancies, still-born foals, and fatal birth defects has caused even CSU to issue a warning about vaccinating with this during the first three months of pregnancy. One facility we heard of lost 14 out of 19 verified pregnancies after they vaccinated with WNV. Yet another breeder lost 4 out of 4 pregnancies after vaccinating (by the vet who knew the mares were pregnant) with both WNV and Rhino. After reading about and viewing vet-gathered data [HTTP://LOST-FOALS-GROUP.4T.COM], we suggest no WNV vaccines at all during pregnancy.

For informational purposes, mid-term miscarriages can also be caused by *nitrosis* poisoning from over-fertilized hay or forage. We lost 3 fetuses one year due to this. When our wonderful vet came out after the second, he got out of his truck announcing we must have rhino on the place and that he was going to vaccinate all our stock immediately since we had not followed his advice originally in this matter. John calmly asked if there could be any reason for this second miscarriage other than rhino and would a test on the fetus show if it indeed had rhino. The upshot of it was, after much discussion, that yes, *nitrosis* could cause such an effect and that yes, we could test the fetus for both *nitrosis* and rhino. The tests came back very high nitrogen and absolutely no sign of rhino. Since that time, we have had all our hay tested for nitrogen levels; this is a special request and not something normally done during standard nutritional testing. It turned out that particular deadly hay batch we had was due to contaminated irrigation water from surrounding fields; the hay field itself had never been fertilized.

The same goes for any deworming [HORSE BASICS: PARASITES] that might be necessary. If your mare has been on the full **DYNAMITE** program, including daily **Excel** and annual-quarterly detoxing with **Herbal Tonic**, for at least one year (preferably two), most **DYNAMITE** distributors find (via fecal counts) that is all that is necessary. We certainly believe that any of the "-mectins" (Ivermectin, etc. [HORSE FAQ:IVERMECTIN]) or Quest, should be absolutely avoided; we can only recommend Safeguard being used in a single dose for a mare whose fecal count is over 200 and even that with caution.

Hormone injections (usually prostaglandin) are generally used with mares who are not cycling strongly or who require "short cycling" due to a missed settling. Such injections do cause the mare to ovulate, but the cost to the mare's system seems to us to be unduly harsh. If you have ever witnessed, as we have, a mare in the grip of this forced hormone treatment, with her sweating, tremors, cramping and collapsing, perhaps you would feel as we do that such medications should be used very rarely if at all. Most **DYNAMITE** mares cycle perfectly and settle on the first cover, especially if the stallion is also a **DYNAMITE** horse, so have no need for artificial methods. Mares who have in the past been "needed" a lot

such as those off the track, definitely need the addition of **Breeder Pac** to the Basics (by the way, the **TNT** is proving a top stallion and broodmare base feed and the extra magnesium can actually aid in vaso-dilation so necessary for the guys), so no hormone injections should be necessary there either. Such mares generally have had an overabundance of blood builders which contain copper; high copper levels can interfere with the magnesium and zinc necessary for healthy reproductive organs and thus proper hormone production. In fact, avoid heavy doses of **SOD** (high in copper and so effective in immune system support) during breeding.

Uterine infections are rare in truly healthy mares, but they can happen. Many **DYNAMITE** distributors have been thrilled to find that a douche of **Tea Tree Oil** and sterile water [MULTI SPECIES: PRODUCT PROFILES: MELALEUCA OIL] can take care of almost any infection without expensive antibiotics with their added danger of increasing antibiotic-resistant strains of dangerous microbes.

Occasionally a mare will have a tipped or loose vulva and may require Caslick sutures especially if she is pooling urine or catching manure; the sutures will need to be removed for breeding and foaling purposes and replaced afterwards. We have, over the years, actually seen improvement in many of these mares by **DYNAMITE** nutrition alone which improves both uterine and ligament tone. Mechanical help can come from doing butt tucks with her and/or backing which tend to strengthen all pelvic muscles. Do these 1-2 times per day along with working tail points with **Release**. Also, too long hind toes with a flat angle can exacerbate the problem. Natural trimming (yes, it is important in *just* broodmares!), to position the leg properly, can actually tip the sacrum a bit allowing for better organ placement.

Frequent and costly ultra-sounds are becoming very common in mare breeding. See our previous discussion on them.

We have seen bills from breeding establishments where the mare care routinely ended up costing more than stud fees in the \$1500-2500 range. Many excess costs might have been mitigated and many extremely upset individuals may have been avoided by full disclosure up front on the part of the facility and a true awareness on the part of the mare owner of reasonable and expected vet costs.

PAPERWORK

We discovered that it is wise to be wary when your breeding contract consists simply of 2-3 lines stating the names of the horses and that's about it. Such an open-ended "contract" can lead to serious abuses on both parts: the breeding farm by charging too much and the mare owners by demanding more than their share of LFG covers and/or even suing for an imaginary problem.

We designed our own contracts by purchasing a number of equine legal books and requesting copies of contracts from numerous reputable breeders. Our Breeding Agreement laid out very specifically what we as a breeding farm were willing and able to do, where we believed our responsibilities began and ended and what all the fees were and what they meant. It also delineated what the responsibilities of the mare owners entailed and essentially just what they could expect for their money with terms such as "live foal guarantee" clearly defined. In fact, our contract consisted of the Breeding Agreement itself plus a Mare Reproduction Report that their vet filled in and signed to assure that all mares coming onto our property were healthy, free from any communicable disease and were in good breeding condition. We still maintained the right to refuse entrance to a mare as we did not always agree with the proficiency of some vets. In fact we had one who called us a number of times asking about what we meant by ovary size and tone and other such questions; we have no idea why he was so popular since he appeared to know extremely little if anything about equine reproduction.

On the following pages we have reproduced samples of paperwork we developed over the years; everything included is for explicit reason. There certainly are other contracts which could be quite different due to breed, geographical location, and even personal choices, yet be extremely effective; ours are just a sample for your perusal so please do not think they are writ in stone. If you have any questions at all about your contract with your chosen stallion manager, it would perhaps be advantageous to have the contract reviewed by an attorney familiar with all possible equine complexities.

WITH AWARENESS AND PREPARATION, breeding *can* be rewarding! ■

Farm Name
contact names,
address,
phone/fax
email, etc.



HORSE BREEDING AGREEMENT

please TYPE or PRINT LEGIBLY - thank you!

- I **STALLION** Name of Stallion _____ Registration # _____ foaling date _____ brief physical description _____
- II **STUD FEES \$ _____ & GUARANTEE** The Stud Manager agrees to diligently try to settle Mare with up to, but not necessarily including, three live cover services per heat cycle with the above named Stallion. If Mare does not settle, as indicated by veterinarian administered ultrasounds within 16 days of last servicing in a heat cycle, after being serviced by Stallion for two (2) consecutive heat cycles, unless an extension is deemed appropriate by Stallion Manager, Mare Owner will hold this Breeding Farm harmless, with Stallion's responsibilities being completed and all fees being due in full. An additional Veterinarian Examination is required before any Mare is returned for breeding. It is the responsibility of the Mare Owner to have the ultrasounds performed and to see that an open mare, or approved substitute with appropriate paperwork, is brought to the Farm in a timely manner. Under no circumstances will servicing of either original or substitute mare continue past current Breeding Season, as determined by Farm Manager, into following year. If the above named Stallion dies or becomes unable to perform his function as a Breeding Stud during initial breeding season, this Farm will refund all portions of stud fees paid on non-pregnant mares. No mare will be released from Farm until all fees are paid in full.
- III **BOOKING FEE \$ _____ Must accompany Breeding Agreement.** This reserves space for mare, is non-refundable, and is deducted from Stud Fee.
- IV **LIVE FOAL \$ _____ GUARANTEE** in addition to Stud Fee if desired - A LIVE FOAL is defined as one that stands and nurses. This LFG provides for a return breeding only during the Breeding Season of the foaling year. To be sure mare maintained her pregnancy over the winter, please vet check mare in early spring of the foaling year in order to comply with this Farm's LFG. In the case of Resorption, Miscarriage, or Birth of Non-Viable Foal, it is the sole responsibility of Mare Owner to see that this Farm is notified in writing by the attending Veterinarian within 10 days of discovery of such an event. Only upon such written notification will the Farm supply Mare Owner with the necessary Return LFG Agreement and new Mare Health & Reproductive Certificate as per Clause IX. Mare Owner may substitute a different Mare upon the approval of the Farm Manager and upon fulfilling all requirements as herein stated. If Mare Owner fails to submit appropriate paperwork in a timely manner and/or fails to deliver such Mare or Substitute for Breeding during stated time period, then any and all fees paid shall be held by the Farm and this contract will thereby be considered completed. Under no circumstance will LFG re-breeding continue into following year. Farm Manager has the right to refuse the LFG option due to age, breeding condition, lack of handling ability, etc. LFG DESIRED [] Farm Manager initials: accepted _____ refused _____
- V **FOAL REGISTRATION** Upon notification of the settling of the mare as per ultra-sound examination within 16 days of last servicing, the Stallion Owner/Farm Manager agrees to execute and supply all documentation necessary for foal's registration into either AQHA or APHA, depending on breed registry of dam, the cost of such registering to be borne solely by the Mare Owner. All forms and costs for foal registration in any other registry will be solely the Mare Owner's responsibility, with Stallion Owner/Manager agreeing only to the signing of such documentation as supplied by Mare Owner.
- VI **ASSIGNMENT** This Breeding Contract may not be assigned or transferred to another party without prior consent of Stallion Owner/Manager.
- VII **MARE INFORMATION** In order for this Breeding Contract to be valid, signer MUST be the REGISTERED OWNER [] of said Mare, or offer other valid proof of ownership: TRANSFER REPORT [], BRAND INSPECTION [], BILL OF SALE, or LEASE AGREEMENT []. Copy of appropriate proof of ownership (please check appropriate box above) and Booking Fee must accompany this Breeding Agreement .
- mare name: _____ reg. # _____ date foaled/age: _____
color & description: _____
foal at side [] NO [] YES date of foaling: _____ insurance carrier: _____
approximate month, date & time of delivery to Farm: _____
- VIII **MARE OWNER/LESSEE INFORMATION** name/s _____ address _____ city: _____ state/zip: _____
home phone: _____ work/other phone/s: _____ email address: _____
- IX **MARE HEALTH & BEHAVIOR** All mares entering Farm premises must have the completed Broodmare Repro Report provided by the Farm []; lack of such will constitute grounds of refusing entry of mare into Farm Facility. All incoming Mares are expected to be in Breeding Condition and unshod. The final determination that a Mare is in Breeding Condition is made solely by the Farm Manager. Impediments may be, but are not limited to, excessive age, underweight, anti-social behavior, or inability to be led, tied or otherwise handled and cared for in a normal way for live-cover breeding purposes.
- X **VETERINARIAN** If Veterinarian Services, whether relating to reproductive needs, illness, injury, are deemed necessary by the Farm Manager during Mare/foal's residence at the Farm, the Farm is hereby authorized to use Mare Owner's Vet of Choice, Farm Veterinarian or CSU. The Mare Owner hereby accepts full financial responsibility for any such treatment rendered.
vet of choice: _____ phone: _____
- XI **BOARD FEES & AGREEMENT** \$5.00/day. Mares and/or foals are diligently cared for in a generally acceptable manner with sufficient quantities of water, hay, grain & minerals (other supplements to be supplied by Mare Owner) in individual pens. Multiple mares with the same owner may be placed together with no reduction of Boarding Fees. There is a three week (21 day) limit on all Mare Care unless otherwise excepted by Farm Manager.
- XII **WAIVER** During the time that the Mare/Foal is in the custody of the above named Breeding Farm, Stallion Owner/Manager or any employee of same, shall not be liable for any sickness, disease, theft, death or injury which may be suffered by said mare and/or foal at her side or for any action whatsoever arising out of or being connected in any way with breeding or boarding of the mare and/or foal.
- XIII **DATE & SIGNATURE** The signing of this document presumes a thorough reading, understanding and acceptance of same. DATE _____.

Mare Owner(s)/Lessee(s) _____ Stallion Owner/Manager: _____

Original is Farm property; please make a copy for your own records. All checks are to be made payable to: _____ Thank you

Farm Name
contact names,
address,
phone/fax
email, etc.



RETURN LFG BREEDING AGREEMENT

please TYPE or PRINT LEGIBLY - thank you!

- I **STALLION** Name of Stallion Registration # foaling date brief physical description
- II **STUD FEES & GUARANTEE** There is no Stud Fee on a Live foal Guarantee. The Stud Manager agrees to diligently try to settle Mare with up to, but not necessarily including, four live cover breedings with the above name Stallion. If Mare does not settle after being serviced by Stallion for two (2) consecutive heat cycles, unless an extension is deemed appropriate by Stallion Manager, Mare Owner will hold this Breeding Farm harmless, with Stallion's responsibilities being completed and thus terminating all obligations of original Breeding Agreement. If the above named Stallion dies or becomes unable to perform his function as a Breeding Stud, this Farm offers the Mare Owner the options of: 1) refund of all stud fees, but not mare/foal care or Veterinary fees OR 2) transfer of stud fees paid to be applied to another of our Stallions.
- III **LIVE FOAL GUARANTEE** Under the terms of the original Breeding Agreement, there is no Live foal Guarantee applicable to either Original Mare or Substitute Mare.
- IV **FOAL REGISTRATION** When all Mare breeding/boarding costs and fees are paid, the Stallion Owner/Farm Manager agrees to execute and supply all documentation necessary for foal's registration into either AQHA or APHA, depending on breed registry of dam. Forms and costs for foal registration in any other registry will be solely the Mare Owner's responsibility, with Stallion Owner/Manager agreeing only to the signing of such documentation as supplied by Mare Owner.
- V **ASSIGNMENT** This LFG Agreement may be assigned or transferred to another party with consent of Stallion Owner/Manager.
- VI **MARE INFORMATION** In order for this Breeding Contract to be valid, signer **MUST** be the **REGISTERED OWNER** [] of said Mare, or offer other valid proof of ownership: **TRANSFER REPORT** [], **BRAND INSPECTION** [], **BILL OF SALE**, or **LEASE AGREEMENT** []. Copy of such (*check appropriate box*) must accompany this LFG Breeding Agreement. **ORIGINAL MARE** [] **SUBSTITUTE MARE** [] for _____
- mare name: reg. # date foaled:
- color & description:
- foal at side [] **NO** [] **YES** date of foaling: insurance carrier:
- approximate month, date & time of delivery to Farm:
- VII **MARE OWNER/LESSEE INFORMATION** name/s
- address city: state/zip:
- home phone: work/other phone/s:
- VIII **MARE HEALTH & BEHAVIOR** All mares entering Farm premises must have the completed **Broodmare Repro Report** provided by the Farm []. All incoming Mares are expected to be in Breeding Condition and unshod. The final determination that a Mare is in Breeding Condition is made solely by the Farm Manager. Impediments may be, but are not limited to, excessive age, underweight, anti-social behavior, or inability to be led, tied or otherwise handled and cared for in a normal way for breeding purposes.
- IX **VETERINARIAN** If Veterinarian Services, whether relating to illness, injury or reproductive needs, are deemed necessary by the Farm Manager during Mare/foal's residence at the Farm, and the Farm Manager is unable to contact Mare Owner and Vet of Choice, the Farm is hereby authorized to use it's Veterinarian or CSU. the Mare Owner hereby accepts full financial responsibility for any such treatment rendered.
- vet of choice: phone:
- X **BOARD FEES & AGREEMENT** **First 30 days = \$2.00/day.** Mares and/or foals are diligently cared for in a generally acceptable way with sufficient quantities of hay, grain (if desired) & water; most are supplied with individual pens with access to rotational turnout. Multiple mares with the same owner may be placed together with no reduction of Boarding Fees. There is a sixty (60) day limit on all Mare Care unless otherwise excepted by Farm Manager.
- XI **WAIVER** During the time that the mare/foal is in the custody of the above named Breeding Farm, Stallion Owner/Manager or any employee of same, shall not be liable for any sickness, disease, theft, death or injury which may be suffered by said mare and/or foal at her side or for any action whatsoever arising out of or being connected in any way with breeding or boarding of the mare and/or foal.
- XII **DATE & SIGNATURE** This agreement is entered into on this _____ day of _____, 1999 / 2000

Mare Owner/Lessee
Manager

Stallion Owner/

Farm Name
 contact names,
 address,
 phone/fax
 email, etc.



BROODMARE REPRO REPORT

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE LEGIBLY

NOTE: no mare will be accepted onto premises without all paperwork in hand & completed in full

SECTION 1 - TO BE COMPLETED BY MARE OWNER BEFORE VET'S ARRIVAL

MARE'S name	OWNER/LESSOR name/s		
registration #	birthdate	address	
color & description	city/state/zip		
DOES MARE: LEAD? _____ TIE? _____ PULL-BACK? _____ KICK? _____ ANY VICES WE SHOULD KNOW OF?	home phone	work #1	work #2
	cell phone	other emergency #	
IF MARE IS SHOD, PLEASE HAVE YOUR FARRIER PULL AT LEAST HIND SHOES			

SECTION 2 - TO BE COMPLETED IN FULL AND SIGNED BY ATTENDING VETERINARIAN ONLY IF SECTION 1 IS COMPLETE

<p>TODAY'S DATE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a first exam for this year.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mare has foal at side foaling date: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a second exam due to inability to settle in foal</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is an LFG exam due to: reabsorption <input type="checkbox"/> abortion <input type="checkbox"/> non-viable foal <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>REPRO HISTORY</p> <p>Maiden: yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> # pregnancies ____ # live births ____ unknown <input type="checkbox"/> history of twinning? yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> unknown <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>estrus cycles: average <input type="checkbox"/> short <input type="checkbox"/> long <input type="checkbox"/> 'silent' <input type="checkbox"/> unknown <input type="checkbox"/> explain: _____</p> <p>Has mare ever required hormone medication to support either cycles or pregnancy? <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> yes If yes, please explain: _____</p> <p>Has mare been on hormone medication to suppress cycles? <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> yes If yes, please explain: _____</p> <p>Has mare ever required sedation in order to accept repro examina- tions and/or servicing? <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> yes If yes, please explain: _____</p>	<p>ATTENDING VETERINARIAN</p> <p>name: _____</p> <p>address: _____</p> <p>city/state/zip: _____</p> <p>phone: _____</p> <p>IN MY OPINION, THIS MARE IS IN THE FOLLOWING BREEDING CONDITION: <input type="checkbox"/> excellent <input type="checkbox"/> good <input type="checkbox"/> poor</p> <p>OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS</p>
<p>GENERAL CONDITION</p> <p>heart _____ lungs _____ temp _____</p> <p>weight _____ coat _____</p> <p>hooves _____ eyes _____</p> <p>current meds: _____</p> <p>other: _____</p>	<p>REPRO EXAM</p> <p>anal positioning: <input type="checkbox"/> normal <input type="checkbox"/> other _____</p> <p>vulvar conformation: <input type="checkbox"/> normal <input type="checkbox"/> other _____</p> <p>hymen: <input type="checkbox"/> none <input type="checkbox"/> partial <input type="checkbox"/> full</p> <p>R ovary: texture/size _____ follicle _____ mm</p> <p>L ovary: texture/size _____ follicle _____ mm</p> <p>discharge: <input type="checkbox"/> none <input type="checkbox"/> some <input type="checkbox"/> copious</p>	<p>signed: _____</p>
<p>INOCULATIONS <i>must be current in standard vaccinations; homeopathic nosodes accepted</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Coggins - required proof of negative test only for out-of-state &/or campaigned mares</p> <p>date/s & type administered by <input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Vet</p> <p>signed _____</p>	<p>flush/infusion: <i>we prefer all mares to have a general antibiotic flushing/infusion before entering this breeding facility</i></p> <p>culture: results <input type="checkbox"/> unnecessary <input type="checkbox"/> necessary – results</p> <p>biopsy: <input type="checkbox"/> unnecessary <input type="checkbox"/> necessary – results</p>	