

## Weekly Pile for Week of May 27 2012

Hey Everybody,

Included is the Weekly Pile of Information for the Week of May 27, 2012, Extension's Equine related educational information & announcements for Rockingham & Guilford Counties. To have something included in the Weekly Pile, please follow these simple guidelines.

- Information included needs to be educational in nature &/or directly related to Rockingham or Guilford Counties.
- provided information is a resource to the citizens of Rockingham/Guilford Counties.
- provided information does not require extra time or effort to be listed.
- Listings for Swap Shop will not list pricing details.
- Please E-mail information to me by Wednesday each Week.
- Please keep ads or events as short as possible – with NO FORMATTING, NO unnecessary Capitalization's, and NO ATTACHED DOCUMENTS.  
(If sent in that way, it may not be included)
- Please include contact information - Phone, Email and alike.
- PLEASE PUT WEEKLY PILE IN SUBJECT LINE when you send into me.
- The Weekly Pile is not for listings for Commercial type properties or products.

If I forgot to include anything in this email it was probably an oversight on my part, but please let me know!

If you have a question or ideas that you would like covered in the Weekly Pile, please let me know and I will try to include. As Always – I would like to hear your comments about the Weekly Pile or the Extension Horse Program in Rockingham or Guilford Counties!

### **Included in This Weeks Pile:**

- 1. TOMORROW** Meat Handling & Cutting Workshop - June 1
- 2. THEFTS**
- 3. 15 Steps to Minimizing Theft of Horses and Equipment**
- 4. You Asked**
- 5. Ergot & Ergot Toxicosis**



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## 2. THEFTS

This past week I came across a couple of articles about thefts of numerous types that just “caught my eye” just like the many items catch the eyes of a thief. Theft obviously nothing new but it would be my guess that with our economic situation and high prices that we will see more of this problem. It is also from what I have noticed that in this part of the country that agricultural items that are stolen just don’t seem to get the attention from the authorities & press like they do in other parts of the country.

There have been numerous items stolen from farms since I have been here, anywhere from large pieces of equipment to bales of hay. I have been on two different farms while with the land owner and come upon folks loading trucks with hay from a barn that was out of plain sight. In both of these cases they were people that the land owner knew and in both cases the folks taking the hay said that they thought they had an understanding about getting hay?? Neither case had the landowner ever been paid for hay from these individuals previously and in both cases the landowner had hay stolen in the past.

My point with this is for you to be very aware of your hay, feed, your tack & your equipment because many times these items are located in places that out of sight and can be easily taken and then easily resold. I do not have an easy solution to this problem but would suggest that effort is made not to leave out the invitation for thieves by making items not easily seen or easily accessed. Lock what ya can.

### Hay Thefts Increase In Southwest –

<http://hayandforage.com/hay/hay-thefts-increase-southwest>

Record-high prices spark theft of alfalfa, concerns for horses

[http://www.lcsun-news.com/las\\_cruces-news/ci\\_20525626/record-high-prices-spark-theft-alfalfa-concerns-horses](http://www.lcsun-news.com/las_cruces-news/ci_20525626/record-high-prices-spark-theft-alfalfa-concerns-horses)

Thefts Continue: Thieves target tack and more

<http://www.countryworldnews.com/news/headlines/986--thefts-continue-theives-target-tack-and-more.html>

Cattle rancher reports hay theft

<http://www.mtexpress.com/index2.php?ID=2005140107>

Warning over hay thefts as prices soar –

(2010) <http://www.fwi.co.uk/Articles/17/08/2010/122898/Warning-over-hay-thefts-as-prices-soar.htm>

\$30,000 hay bale theft in Maricopa County

<http://westernfarmpress.com/alfalfa/30000-hay-bale-theft-maricopa-county>

Idaho hay thefts (2008) -

<http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2026&dat=20080711&id=sNsyAAAAIBAJ&sjid=RfAFAAAAIBAJ&pg=4878,1420377>

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### **3. 15 Steps to Minimizing Theft of Horses and Equipment**

Pete Gibbs and Leman H. Wall, Professor and Extension Horse Specialist, and Extension Assistant-Animal Science/4-H; The Texas A&M University System

**Individuals can take several precautions in the management and care of horses, facilities and equipment to minimize the risk of theft. Below contains 15 steps to minimizing theft on any horse farm.**

**Almost any victim of horse theft can attest to the emotional and economic effect of such a crime. Over the past several years, both large- and small-scale owners have suffered thefts of horses, trucks, trailers, saddles and other tack.**

**Horses and equipment are stolen from:**

- Barns**
- Farms**
- Pastures**
- Boarding and training facilities**
- Competitive events**
- Even from backyards**

**Tracking stolen horses can be difficult because theft reports are often delayed and stolen horses can change hands frequently and at remote locations. Individual horse owners can take steps in the management and care of horses, facilities and equipment to minimize the risk of theft. Here are 15 steps to curbing horse theft. At least some of them should be applicable for every horse owner.**

**1. Permanently mark horses (and equipment) using one or more methods. Thieves are less likely to steal horses that are permanently marked, and those that are stolen are easier to track and recover. Horses can be marked permanently by: Freeze brand -- using customized, number or letter iron and by alpha angle code methods;**

**Hot iron brand, Microchip, an implant; and/or Lip tattoo**

**2. Photograph horses (& equipment) and keep photos current.**

**Photograph both sides of the horse as close as possible, being sure to get the entire horse in the frame. Although saddles, blankets, leg wraps and people may look good in a photo, they often impair the photo's usefulness for identification.**

**Photograph the front of the horse, being sure to get a clear picture of the head. If possible, also take a rear view.**

**Take close-up pictures of any unique, identifying characteristics, such as a brand, permanent scar or white markings.**

**3. Establish an organized, easy to find, proof of ownership file. To save valuable time and frustration in proving ownership should a theft occur, keep on file:**

**Registration papers, if the horse is registered with a breed association;**

**Dated bill of sale, and/or breed association transfer of ownership paperwork;**

**Photographs; and Description of mark or brand and written description of all unique characteristics.**

**4. Record the permanent brand or mark with the county clerk's office in the county where the horse lives.**

**Registration helps law enforcement officers and brand inspectors communicate and determine ownership and can speed the process of filing theft reports.**

**5. Secure barns, corrals or pens from the road with a good perimeter fence and well-built gates that can be locked.**

**Slowing a potential horse thief and/or making access to horses & equipment more difficult can deter theft significantly.**

**6. If you plan to build a barn or corral, locate it away from the road.**

**Place facilities beyond your house if at all possible. They are less likely targets if more difficult to access and require thieves to pass by a house.**

**7. Manage pastured horses (equipment) to make theft more difficult.**

**For safety as well as theft deterrence, never leave halters on pasture horses.**

**Do not feed horses close to the pasture gate or near the road. Although convenient for owners, this practice actually helps potential thieves. Hungry horses will congregate around the usual feeding area making them easy to catch.**

**Keep pasture gates locked.**

**Check on pasture horses regularly and vary the time of your trips to the pasture.**

**Absentee owners sometimes don't realize for several days that their horses have been stolen from pastures.**

**8. Do not hang keys, halters and lead ropes on stall fronts, corral gate posts or anywhere in the open.**

**Secure halters in a locked tack room or feed room.**

**9. Permanently identify and lock up expensive tack.**

**Consider having your driver's license number engraved on the underside of saddles, expensive headstalls and other valuable items. While it will not prevent theft, locking the tack room does deter it by increasing the time a thief must be on your property.**

**10. Make horse and livestock trailers & equipment inaccessible, hide them from view and be able to prove ownership.**

**Use commercially available locks to secure the hitch on a bumper-pull trailer.**

**Many gooseneck trailers can be padlocked.**

**Park trailers in a barn or somewhere hidden from traffic to make it harder for thieves to determine what is available and when or if horse owners are home.**

**On commercially manufactured trailers, know where the VIN or serial number is located -- often on the frame or tongue -- and have the number on file.**

**Know and record your trailer's license plate number.**

**Take and file photographs of your trailer.**

**11. Use signs and warning posters where appropriate.**

**To signal to potential thieves that the owner is informed, active and aware, post such notices as: No trespassing signs**

**Security system signs and**

**Farm or livestock association membership signs.**

**12. Install motion-sensor lights.**

**Motion-sensor lights turn on when they detect activity in strategic areas.**

**13. Talk to local law enforcement authorities about the value of dogs and other animals in deterring theft.**

**Thieves dislike dealing with dogs. However, consider that dogs also require management.**

**14. Keep the activity level up around horses.**

Horses isolated from well-traveled areas and often left alone are easy targets. To deter theft: Vary your routine to make it difficult for potential thieves to know when you will be away.

Avoid advertising when you are leaving town.

15. Establish a horse and facilities watch program with other horse owners in your area.

Take turns checking on each other's horses.

Check on group members' horses regularly when they are out of town.

Although horses and equipment will never be entirely safe from theft, many are stolen simply because it was made easy for thieves. Taking these steps to prevent theft will help you keep your horses and equipment safe.

For more information or more specific guidelines for individual situations, contact law enforcement and talk to your neighbors.

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#### **4. You Asked: How I can tell if hay I am buying is going to be moldy before I get it home and open it? I cannot open the bales before buying to check to see if they are dusty. How can I tell dust from mold? How much of a risk to human health is it to feed hay to horses?**

Unfortunately, it is very difficult to determine if hay is dusty/moldy prior to opening the bale. Determining if the bale is primarily dusty or moldy is often difficult as well, unless there is obvious mold on the hay. The best way to obtain good hay is by dealing with hay producers or dealers who will stand behind their product. If you are buying hay just anywhere, unfortunately, many times there there is no recourse for returning poor-quality hay.

Hay can be dusty/moldy for a number of reasons. The hay is baled too wet and becomes moldy, or it was rained on after baling but before it was removed from the field. The hay is often dusty when it was too dry before baling, the field was cut too low to the ground, or the hay is last year's hay and has already been stored for a long time. However, even good hay can have dust and mold present, as can be seen when reviewing this Web site on

Heaves [http://old.cvm.msu.edu/research/pulmon/site/respiratory\\_diseases/diseases/Heaves/Heaves.html](http://old.cvm.msu.edu/research/pulmon/site/respiratory_diseases/diseases/Heaves/Heaves.html). As this Web site demonstrates, your horse is at a greater risk of health concerns than you are since the horse has its nostrils in the poor environment the entire time that it is eating. It is best for both you and your horse to feed in a well-ventilated area.

I would like to point out (once again) that now that round bales are being fed more & more, often times these bales are not protected from the weather which opens the door for creating a mold habitat in the hay. The damage that can be done especially over time could be irreversible for the horse. Mold and dust can inflame the respiratory tract and impair breathing. Many horses can develop permanent lung damage after consuming moldy or dusty hay. It is my experience that laboratory analysis of hay for mold is not very helpful since many molds are not harmful. Mold can also cause digestive upsets in the horse.

One of the best ways to check for dust or mold is to physically handle the hay and look for signs & also simply smell the hay for that musty kind of smell.

Hay should be stored in a dry, clean environment. Moisture causes mold to grow on the hay, and moldy hay should not be fed to horses. Also, hay should not be exposed to the elements, which could decrease the hay's nutrient quality and cause browning or yellowing.

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## **5. Ergot & Ergot Toxicosis**

**I have not seen this here, (but it can be) I have included this because I was asked about it.**

**Ergot is a fungus that produces large dark, spur like structures protruding from the seedheads of cool season grasses (tall fescue, orchardgrass, ryegrass, timothy, bluegrass & other cool season, warm season - Dallisgrass) and small grains**

(wheat, oats, barley & rye) The occurrence of ergot varies year to year and can be triggered by cool, wet conditions during the spring. Ergot can cause gangrenous type of poisoning & abortion.

What is ergot poisoning? Ergot is toxic to animals. Animals consume ergot by eating the sclerotia present in contaminated feed. All domestic animals are susceptible, including birds. Cattle seem to be the most susceptible. Two well known forms of ergotism exist in animals, an acute form characterized by convulsions, and a chronic form characterized by gangrene. A third form of ergotism is characterized by hyperthermia (increased body temperature) in cattle, and a fourth form is characterized by agalactia (no milk) and lack of mammary gland development, prolonged gestations, and early foal deaths in mares fed heavily contaminated feed. Which form of ergotism is manifested depends on the type of ergot consumed and the ratio of major toxic alkaloids present in the ergot: ergotamine, ergotoxine, and ergometrine. Paspalum is a water grass distributed in pastures in southern states. The responses of animals consuming ergot are usually quite variable and are dependent on variations in alkaloid content, frequency of ingesting ergot, quantity of ergot ingested, climatic conditions under which ergot grew, the species of ergot involved, and the influence of other impurities in the feed such as histamine and acetylcholine.

**Ergot Toxicity (Ergotism)** Ergot toxicity is caused by continued ingestion of the parasitic fungus *Claviceps Purpurea* that replaces the grain or seed of rye and other small grains of forage plants. Ergot causes constriction of blood vessels to the muscles. In cold climates the extremities become susceptible to gangrene. **Animal Clinical Symptoms** - Symptoms of convulsive ergotism include hyperexcitability, belligerence, ataxia or staggering, lying down, convulsions and backward arching of the back. Symptoms of gangrenous ergotism involve the extremities of the animal including the nose, ears, tail, and limbs. Early signs usually start in the hind limbs. Lameness may appear from two to six weeks after first ingesting ergot. There may be pain, stamping of the feet, and coolness of the affected areas. If ergot consumption continues, sensation to pain is lost in the affected areas and an indented line appears between normal tissue and gangrenous tissue. This gangrenous tissue is called 'dry gangrene.' Eventually all tissue below this line will slough. Besides the limbs, other extremities involved can include the tail and ears. The tips and distal areas of the extremities will also slough.

Early signs of gangrenous ergotism usually start in the hind limbs. Animals fed large amounts of ergot over time lose portions of their hooves, ears tails, combs, and wattles. Spontaneous abortion and loss of milk has occurred in cows and sows fed even small amounts of ergot. Ergoty feed should not be fed to

breeding females. Animals fed large amounts of ergot over time lose portions of their ears or other extremities.

**Diagnosis of Ergot Poisoning -** A diagnosis of ergot poisoning is based on finding the sclerotia in the feed or pasture and whether the animals are exhibiting symptoms of ergotism. Extraction and detection of ergot alkaloids also may be done if ground feed is suspect.

**Treatment of Ergot Poisoning -** The only treatment for ergotism is to remove the ergot-contaminated feed or remove the animals from the contaminated pasture. If nervous signs are present, call your veterinarian for medical advice and supplemental therapy such as pain control. If dry gangrene is present, the affected portion will be sloughed. There is nothing to reverse this process. If secondary infections or open wounds are present, call your veterinarian for appropriate therapy.

**Prevention and Control:** Ergot can be prevented by grazing or in hay by harvesting before seedheads appear or before flowering. Control of ergotism consists of an immediate change to an ergot-free diet. Under pasture feeding conditions, frequent grazing or topping of pastures prone to ergot infection during the summer months will reduce flower head production and help control the disease. Grain or hay containing even small amounts of ergot should not be fed to pregnant animals.

The ergot is contained in the ovary of the flower. Commercially prepared feeds will rarely contain ergot. Non-commercial grain (home grown) should be screened prior to feeding (and planting to prevent contamination of future crops). Special care should be taken in feeding screenings. If feeding ergoty grain is unavoidable, the amount of sclerotia should be reduced to an amount less than 0.1% (by weight) of the feed through mixing with 'clean' grain. Again, ergoty feed should not be fed to breeding females.

**Ergot photos -**

<https://www.google.com/search?q=ergot+extension+photos&hl=en&client=firefox-a&hs=xwB&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&prmd=imvns&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=JMLHT-PxIIG68AStsYzHDw&ved=0CEIQsAQ&biw=1280&bih=662>

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## **6. HELP Save The Riding Trail At Bryan Park**

***If you have been reading the Weekly Pile you have seen the previous postings about the riding trail at/in Bryan Park. BUT, if you had not read or did not know, Guilford County has been considering turning the 5 1/2 mile Loop Equestrian Riding Trail in Bryan Park into a "bike trail" because of low participation of horse riders & trail clearing. Please help to not let this happen!***

**Join the Equestrian Trail Alliance of Guilford County on Sunday June 3rd at 5 pm at 7790 Doggett Rd Bryan Park for an organized ride...Bring your horse to ride & bring hand clippers to help trim branches from horseback. The trail is still under construction and the bridges aren't in, so bring your experienced trail horses.**

**The entrance to the trail is located at Gram Airpark right across from Moss Creek. Look for the double red gates! If anyone would like a gate key (so you can enter anytime) - send \$3.00 and a self addressed envelope to Betsy Rice 5918 Firewood Trail Greensboro 27410 ( the gates are locked because the airpark has expensive equipment out there - the road is shared by Guilford County & Airpark)**

**Bring your Horses, Ride, Show Your Support and prove to Guilford County Officials that the equestrian community supports this trail!**

**For more information Contact: HELP Save The Riding Trail At Bryan Park**

***If you have been reading the Weekly Pile you have seen the many postings about the riding trail in Bryan Park. BUT, if you had not read or did not know, Guilford County has been considering turning the 5 1/2 mile Loop Equestrian Riding Trail in Bryan Park into a "bike trail" because of low participation of horse riders & trail clearing. Please help to not let this happen!***

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For more information Contact: Betsy Rice ([bluefarm11@yahoo.com](mailto:bluefarm11@yahoo.com)) or Paula Nelson <[pasharr@triad.rr.com](mailto:pasharr@triad.rr.com)>

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## **7. Riding across America for a Cause - Can U Help?**

**I was contacted yesterday about this fella who was riding across America for a good cause. He will be coming through this area and was asked for folks that may be willing to help him out. Below is the information that I was sent about him.**

**Johnny Warnshuis: [cowboyforacure.com](http://cowboyforacure.com)  
facebook- cowboyforacure**

**He is leaving Hickory, NC Friday June 1st, headed to Greensboro, then north to VA. You can follow his journey on his website.**

**If you think you would like to help out or want more information contact Lynn at [828 238 2596](tel:8282382596)..feel free to call anytime**

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### **8. Flintrock Farm Activities**

**Flintrock Farm Open Show Series**

**Second Open Show – this Saturday June 2nd-  
2nd Open Show of the 2012 Series**

**[www.flintrockfarm.com](http://www.flintrockfarm.com)**

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### **9. Open Fun / Game Show - June 16**

**"Open Fun / Game Show" @ Piedmont Saddle Club in Colfax, June 16th @ 5:00pm and July 21st @ 5:00pm. \$2 per class or \$10 per horse & rider combo for all classes all day. No admission fee onto grounds.**

**See [www.piedmontsaddleclub.org](http://www.piedmontsaddleclub.org) for class list and more information.**

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**10. HAY DIRECTORY - A Hay Directory is maintained by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service for the Rockingham County and Guilford County area. This directory is intended as a service to both hay producers and buyers in the area. If you are in need of hay or would like to be added (or removed) from this list please call me at 1-800-666-3625 or 342-8235 and let me know your name, address & phone #, type of hay, number of bales, (square or round bales) and weight per bale.**

**MANAGE YOUR PASTURES!**

**Please let me know if you have hay to sell!**

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**11. SWAP SHOP  
- 1995 Cherokee Thunder, 2-Horse bumper pull trailer. Good condition and lots of updates done recently. \$2500 Call Deb 336-687-3138.**

- Pine Shavings etc. – 2.8 cuft compressed plastic bags, easy to pick, no waste, easy to store \$ 4.50 + tax per bag. Contact Terri C. Aprile @ [\(336\) 698-0207](tel:3366980207) [shoponys@gmail.com](mailto:shoponys@gmail.com)

- Equine Sports Massage Therapy – Certified since 1994 from Equissage. Appointments on site at your farm. Contact Terri C. Aprile @ [\(336\) 698-0207](tel:3366980207) [shoponys@gmail.com](mailto:shoponys@gmail.com)

- Riding Apparel For Sale - English (saddle seat-suits, day coats, shirts, jodphurs, ties/silk cumber bun sets & hunt seat-shirts, ties) & Western clothes, misc. tack, etc. Contact Terri C. Aprile @ [\(336\) 698-0207](tel:3366980207) [shoponys@gmail.com](mailto:shoponys@gmail.com)

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12. Take A Load Off –  
I need your Clean Jokes, so please send em to me! -

Caught Speeding

The cop got out of his car and the kid, that was stopped for speeding, rolled down his window.

"I've been waiting for you all day," the cop said.

The guy replied, "Yeah, well I got here as fast as I could." When the cop finally stopped laughing, he sent the kid on his way without a ticket.

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I always want to know what you think of the Weekly Pile, good or bad, Especially if it has had ANY IMPACT on you. Let me hear from you!  
\*\*\*\*\*I NEED YOUR IDEAS FOR ARTICLES In FUTURE Newsletters!\*\*\*\*\*  
I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**\*Please remember our Troops who are serving our Country (and there families) those who have come home with wounds and the families that paid the ultimate sacrifice. We owe everything to those who are and have served!**

Thank You!

**I hope that you all have a Great Weekend!**

Ben

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