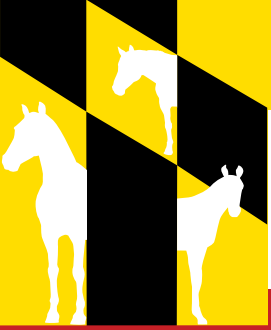


## Farm Stewardship Committee



### Tips for New Horse Farm Owners

by Kimberly K. Egan, MHC President

Many horse people dream of one day owning their own horse farm. For some, it is a lifelong dream; for others it is a necessity for their businesses. Horse farms in Maryland are subject to a number of environmental and safety regulations, however, and it is good to make sure at the outset that your farm complies with all applicable laws.

We recommend that once you've popped open that champagne bottle and celebrated your new farm, go through this short checklist and get your new farm off on the right hoof.

1. Am I following the rules about when I am allowed to spread manure on my pastures?
2. Am I following the rules about when I'm allowed to drill seed?
3. Am I complying with the Maryland Noxious Weed law?
4. Does my farm need an approved Nutrient Management Plan?
5. Are my horses properly fenced out of streams and waterways?
6. Do I have the right mix of forage grasses?
7. Are my forage grasses kept at the the right height?
8. Have I gotten the soils in my pasture tested for nutrient deficiencies?
9. Do I have sufficient stream and waterway setbacks for nutrient applications?
10. Does my farm need to be licensed by the Maryland Horse Industry Board?









Sherri Holdridge

This sounds like a daunting list, but the good news is that there are many resources available to help you navigate these requirements, and many are offered at no cost to you.

MHC's Farm Stewardship Committee exists to help horse farmers find the resources available to implement good farm stewardship practices, including cost sharing programs and state and federal grant funds. You can learn more about those resources and about the Committee on the MHC website at <https://mdhorsecouncil.org/committees/farm-stewardship-committee/>

## SOME COMMON WEEDS THAT ARE TOXIC TO HORSES

Plant Species	Poisonous Parts	Poison Symptom
 <p><b>EASTERN BLACK NIGHTSHADE</b> (<i>Solanum ptychanthum</i>)</p>	Green berries and leaves	Marked thirst, diarrhea, loss of appetite, inability to stand, irregular gait, coma
 <p><b>JOHNSONGRASS</b> (<i>Sorghum halepense</i>)</p>	Leaves and stems when plant is 12 inches or less	Slobbering or frothing, labored breathing, staggering, bleeding from mouth and nasal passages, muscle twitching
 <p><b>POISON HEMLOCK</b> (<i>Conium maculatum</i>)</p>	All parts, especially leaves	Nervousness, twitching of muscles, salivation, lack of coordination, dilation of pupils, paralysis, birth defects, death
 <p><b>WHITE SNAKEROOT</b> (<i>Ageratina altissima</i>)</p>	Leaves and stems	Marked trembling of skeletal muscles, lack of coordination, general body weakness, constipation, inability to swallow or stand
 <p><b>PURPLE MINT</b> (<i>Perilla frutescens</i>)</p>	Leaves, stems, and flowers	Affected animal stands away from herd, usually with its head down, breathing very hard and loudly, usually with froth around mouth and nose; pneumonia, death
 <p><b>WILD CHERRY</b> (<i>Prunus serotina</i>)</p>	Wilted leaves and young twigs	Nervousness, rapid and labored breathing, trembling or jerking muscles, blue color of mouth lining, bright red venous blood, bloating, bitter almond type odor in rumen gas, convulsions, and coma

Keep in mind that when sprayed with herbicides, wilting plants can be very tasty to horses. If you suspect that your horse has eaten a toxic plant, contact your veterinarian immediately for an emergency visit.