

FACT SHEET: Benefits of Best Management Practices



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With nearly 80,000 horses, Maryland has twice as many horses per square mile than Kentucky, Virginia, Texas, and California. If not managed properly, this high density of horses can have a significant impact on water quality and natural resources. Eroding soil from over-grazed pastures and rainwater runoff from unmanaged manure piles carry excess nutrients and sediment to the Bay and its tributaries. Listed below are pasture and barnyard management tips and other best management practices designed to keep nutrients and soil out of waterways.

Pasture Management

Nutrient Management

- Protects water quality
- Can save money
- Enhances grass vigor

Pasture Planting

- Roots hold soil in place preventing erosion
- Provides quality nutritional source
- Reduces toxic weeds

Rotational Grazing

- Extends grazing season
- Reduces feed and supplement costs
- Helps maintain healthy, longer-lasting pasture

Horse Health Benefits

- Provides an improved, high quality, and lower cost feed source
- Reduces digestive issues like colic and gastric ulcers
- Reduces stress and behavioral issues
- Reduces dust that could cause respiratory concerns

Stream Protection

Stream Fencing

- Keeps nutrients out of waterways
- Filters runoff

Stream Crossings

- Reduce risk of injury
- Stabilize stream banks

Horse Health Benefits

- Maintains safe footing year round
- Provides a clean safe drinking supply year round
- Reduces the risk of diseases like Potomac Horse Fever, West Nile Virus, and Salmonella



Watering troughs provide a clean, reliable water supply for animals away from

Heavy Use Pad

- Prevent mud/ice
- Easier manure removal

Roof Runoff Control

- Reduces wet areas/soil losses
- Protects building foundations
- Promotes water collection and reuse

Horse Health Benefits

- Reduces hoof health issues
- Reduces bacterial and fungal leg infections
- Reduces fly breeding areas



One inch of rainfall produces 416 gallons of water per 1,000 square feet of roof area. Rainfall flowing unimpeded from a roof moves large amounts of soil, manure, and other contaminants into waterways.

For more information and free technical assistance contact your local soil conservation district or University of Maryland Extension Office.

| | Soil Conservation | UMD |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Allegany | 301-777-1747, ext. 3 | 301-724-3320 |
| Anne Arundel | 410-571-6757 | 410-222-6755 |
| Baltimore County | 410-527-5290, ext. 3 | 410-771-1761 |
| Calvert | 410-535-1521, ext. 3 | 410-535-3662 |
| Caroline | 410-479-1202, ext. 3 | 410-479-4030 |
| Carroll | 410-848-8200, ext. 3 | 410-386-2760 |
| Catocin | 301-695-2803, ext. 3 | |
| Cecil | 410-398-4411, ext. 3 | 410-996-5280 |
| Charles | 301-934-9588, ext. 3 | 301-934-5404 |
| Dorchester | 410-228-5640, ext. 3 | 410-228-8800 |
| Frederick | 301-695-2803, ext. 3 | 301-600-1594 |
| Garrett | 301-334-6950, ext. 3 | 301-334-6960 |
| Harford | 410-838-6181, ext. 3 | 410-638-3255 |
| Howard | 410-489-7987 | 410-313-2707 |

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| Kent | 410-778-5150, ext. 3 | 410-778-1661 |
| Montgomery | 301-590-2855 | 301-590-9638 |
| Prince Georges | 301-574-5162, ext. 3 | 301-868-9636 |
| Queen Anne's | 410-758-3136, ext. 3 | 410-758-0166 |
| St. Mary's | 301-475-8402, ext. 3 | 301-475-4477 |
| Somerset | 410-651-1575, ext. 3 | 410-651-1350 |
| Talbot | 410-822-1577, ext. 3 | 410-822-1244 |
| Washington County | 301-797-6821, ext. 3 | 301-791-1404 |
| Wicomico | 410-546-4777, ext. 3 | 410-749-6141 |
| Worcester | 410-632-5439, ext. 3 | 410-632-1972 |



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The Horse Outreach Workgroup provides information to horse owners on pasture and manure management issues. The workgroup consists of representatives from local soil conservation districts, the Maryland Department of Agriculture, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, University of Maryland Extension, and the Maryland Horse Industry Board. Follow the Maryland Horse Industry Board on Twitter @MdEquines. Follow the Maryland Horse Industry Board on Facebook facebook.com/MarylandHorseIndustryBoard Visit the University of Maryland Extension extension.umd.edu/horses