**IMMEDIATE NEWS RELEASE-** November 4, 2014 Donna Foulk 610-745-1970

**Penn State Extension Offers “Equine Parasite Control: A Whole Farm Approach”**

Equine gastrointestinal parasites, and their increasing resistance to available dewormers, are a major concern in the equine industry. Taking a whole-farm approach to control can cut down on deworming, save money on products that are no longer effective on your farm, help you learn which horses have natural resistance and which ones are “shedders”, and help reduce parasite resistance. Don’t let parasites rob your horse of his nutrition and health. Just routinely deworming with the same products, or simply rotating dewormers, is not the best method and can cause adverse conditions. Give your horse the best opportunity to be the best athlete or partner he can be.

A one-day short course entitled **“Equine Parasite Control: A Whole Farm Approach”** will be held in four locations across Pennsylvania. The sites and dates include: **January 17th** Lancaster (Lancaster County); **February 7th** in Bethlehem (Northampton County); **February 21s**t in Mill Hall (Clinton County); and **February 28th** in Prospect (Butler County). The course runs 9:00 AM- 3:30 PM at each site. Cost is $45 per person and includes lectures, lunch and materials. Advance registration is needed at least one week prior to each class. For registration materials, contact Donna Foulk at dlf5@psu.edu or at 610-746-1970. The course is open to all interested horse owners, barn managers, equine industry personnel, veterinarians and vet technicians.

Interest in the latest information and studies on parasite control is very high. A grant from the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture and Education program is enabling the PSU Equine Extension team to travel across the state educating horse owners on targeted deworming and non-drug based parasite control methods such as pasture management and composting of manure.

One of the key speakers (at the Lancaster site only) will be Dr. Martin Nielsen from the University Of Kentucky's Gluck Equine Research Center. Dr. Nielsen is one of the foremost equine parasitologists in the world. He will be talking about anthelmintic resistance and the results of his research.

Another key speaker will be Ed Jedrzejewski, DVM and Penn State Equine Farm Manager. He has used targeted de-worming practices along the guidelines of *"Current Concepts for Parasite Control in Horses:* *It Ain’t the 60's Anymore"* written by Ray M. Kaplan, DVM, PhD. According to Dr. Jedrzejewski, “We have been doing fecals on every horse every month since February 2009. After a couple years of monitoring fecals and only doing the targeted deworming, all of the concepts mentioned in Dr. Kaplan's article were clearly obvious in our herd. We had significant resistance to the Benzimidazoles and developing resistance to Pyrantel. We were also able to decrease our use of dewormers by 79% while maintaining the quality of our parasite control.”

Donna Foulk, Equine Natural Resources Educator with Penn State Extension, will speak on parasites and pasture issues such as the effects of temperature and moisture on parasite levels, whether to harrow or not, and enhancing pastures to reduce parasite exposure. Dr. Ann Swinker, PSU Extension Equine Specialist, will speak on “Heating Up Your Manure Management” including information on composting plus the advantages/disadvantages of spreading manure on pastures.

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Those attending the course will have an option to be involved as an *Equine Team Parasite Research Partner*. This year-long involvement will help you make educated decisions concerning parasite management on your own farm based on record keeping and fecal egg counts. Come and learn more at the course and see if you qualify for this exciting management opportunity to help yourself, your farm, and your horses. Be part of a research project aiding horse owners and the environment! During the project data will be collected concerning current deworming practices, occurrences of resistance to types of dewormers, and any benefits to the farms as a result of switching to targeted deworming. All of this information will be published so that the findings are available to horse owners and veterinarians across the state. In order to facilitate collection of data, multiple sites across the state will be established where participating farm owners/ managers can be trained to perform the large number of fecal exams necessary for this project.

During all of the presentations, the team will emphasize the importance of working with the owners' veterinarian to build a customized plan for each person's individual farm. To that effect, the course will also offer CE credits to veterinarians and veterinary technicians who attend one of the short course sessions.

Horses are a big commitment in time, money and emotions. We want to do the best for our horses. So come and make that commitment to keep your horse healthy and help solve equine parasite problems by utilizing the whole farm approach!

For more information on Penn State Extension equine programs visit: <http://extension.psu.edu/animals/equine>. To be added to the list serve regarding future equine extension offerings, contact Norma Young at njy1@psu.edu. Penn State is an equal opportunity university.

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