Benefits

The horse industry in Ohio is very prominent. The number of horse farms and stables are increasing steadily. Proper management of soil and water resources within this industry is imperative in order to maintain the integrity of our local watersheds.

All-weather horse paddocks allow horse owners to reduce sediment erosion on their property which protects local water resources while improving the overall heath and integrity of their own horse pastures and exercise areas. Not only are all-weather horse paddocks environmentally friendly, they are aesthetically pleasing and are relatively simple and inexpensive to install.

What others are saying about all-weather horse paddocks:

"When everyone else's stables are wet and muddy I still have a mud-free paddock for the horses to go out on at all times of the year!"

"I can rotate my pastures now to gain more vegetation on them so they don't get as punched up from excessive use."

"Horse boarding available ...with Mud-Free Paddocks."

For Further Assistance

Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District (contact information available on the ODNR-DSWC website) or a USDA-NRCS Representative for design assistance and/or cost share funding opportunities available to horse owners.

This brochure was created by the staff of the Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District under the authority of the Board of Supervisors and with assistance from the USDA—Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Ohio Department of Natural Resources—Division of Soil and Water Conservation.

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Some of the information for this brochure came from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, State of Ohio Conservation Practice Standard on Livestock Use Area Protection, Section IV, FOTG, Standard 757i.

To contact your local soil and water conservation district please refer to the following sources:

- **The government section of your local phone book**
- **Online at www.dnr.state.oh.us/soilandwater/swcds.htm**
- **ODNR-Division of Soil and Water Conservation District (614) 265-6610**

Last Revision: 12-21-05

All services are provided without regard to race, religion, gender, age, physical or mental handicap, national origin or politics.

All-Weather Horse Paddocks

A Design Guide for All-Weather Horse Paddocks

All-Weather Paddocks For the Horse Industry

What is an all-weather paddock?

All-weather paddocks (corrals) are small, non-irrigated, non-grazable holding pens or exercise lots, often adjacent to horse stalls. They are made up of a combination of a geotextile material and limestone. The combination of these products creates a surface area which stays relatively dry and mud free. All-weather paddocks help protect soil and water resources by reducing the erosion and transportation of sediment into rivers and streams which often results from heavy use areas during rainy weather.

All-weather paddocks also allow for rotation of pastures to enable establishment of more mature and dense vegetation, which aids in reducing mud, erosion, and sedimentation .

When paddock areas are left bare they are a potential source of sediment and manure pollution.

All-weather paddocks are an approved USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation practice and are eligible for Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Soil and Water Conservation (ODNR-OSWC) Agricultural Pollution Abatement (APA) cost share money. Applicants approved for participation in the APA program may receive up to 75% of the cost of the all-weather paddock to a maximum of $5000 or whichever is less. The practice is also eligible for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) through the Farm Bill. Applicants approved for participation in the EQIP Program may receive 50% of the cost of the all-weather paddock with no maximum.

Design & Planning Considerations

To build an all-weather paddock, the following must be considered during the planning phase:

- All runoff should be diverted away from the paddock area. Roof runoff from barns, arenas and other buildings should be placed in gutters and downspouts directed away from the paddock area;
- Compatibility of horses - Because horses don't always get along, be sure to consider the number of horses which will be placed in the given area and the shape of the pen. A round pen may be desired over a square pen to avoid horses being "cornered" by other horses;
- General Sizing - 400-600 square foot per horse (not taking into consideration issues related to compatibility);
- If more exercise is desired for the horse(s) a longer and narrower pad should be considered;
- Owners are responsible for fencing around pad.

Construction Details

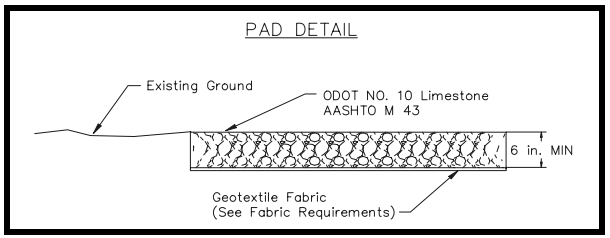
- Average Cost = $1.30 per square foot of Pad (includes excavation of topsoil/organic material, fabric, stone, seed, mulch and labor)
- Fabric must be buried in the soil on the edges of the paddock. Horses have a tendency to "paw" up the edges and rip at the fabric if it gets exposed.
- Pad should be placed at a 1-2% grade.
- Ideally the pad should sit 1-2" above existing grade. The depth of stone on top of fabric may need to be adjusted accordingly.
- Compaction is critical in preparing subbase and placing the ODOT No. 10 Limestone topping. A minimum of 4 passes with a drum roller or rubber tired equipment is required.

Geotextile Fabric Products

The following commercial geotextile products can be used and are available at your local home improvement and pipe supply stores:

- Non-woven Fabric
  - -Amoco ProPex 4553 **
- Woven Fabric
  - -Amoco ProPex 2002 **
  - -SI GeoSolutions GeoTex 200 ST **
- Or other products comparable to the above

*** No endorsement is intended for products mentioned, nor is criticism meant for products not mentioned.*



Technical Assistance & Cost Share

Representatives from your local SWCD will visit your property upon request to provide technical assistance on proper manure storage, disposal, paddock management, and available cost share opportunities. Cost share, or financial assistance, may be available for manure storage structures and other conservation practices. Technical assistance received during these site visits is voluntary and confidential, and will help ensure that the operation is conservation-friendly.