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FEATURED STORY

from:   

'Go Green' in Your Horse Pasture

Story by [Karen Briggs](#)

Protect yourself, your horse, your property and your planet with these ideas from the readers and editors of Perfect Horse.



Preserve beneficial pollinators such as bees and butterflies by reducing pesticide use. With good management, you can still keep unwanted bugs in check. Photo by Betsy Lynch.

When it comes to caring for the environment and your horse pasture, horse owners can make a significant difference. Learn how to "go green" in your horse pasture by reducing pesticides and removing toxic herbicides.

1. Limit pesticide use by controlling fly and mosquito populations through management. Dump out any stagnant, standing water to reduce breeding grounds for biting bugs. Kill fly larvae by incorporating fly predators into your pest control plan, and be sure to compost manure. You'll have the added benefit of a great soil amendment for your pasture, which, in turn, will reduce the need for petroleum-based fertilizers to green up your grass.

2. Pull pasture weeds by hand and mow regularly to reduce the need for toxic herbicides and to avoid reseeding. Maintaining a strong grass cover will limit weed invasion, provide feed and forage, oxygenate the air, prevent water runoff and conserve soil. Prevent overgrazing by utilizing rotational grazing and sacrifice areas.

3. Replace barn light bulbs with fluorescents, and recycle fluorescent bulbs when they burn out. Fluorescent lamps produce just as much light as incandescent bulbs but use a fraction of the

energy. They also last a lot longer, producing less waste.

4. Paper or plastic? Check with your recycling center to see what kinds of feed bags and plastic containers are accepted. Those simple brown or white oat sacks and beet-pulp bags may be recyclable, although high-gloss feed bags with plastic lining are more problematic. Also, check the recycling number on the bottom of your supplement buckets, daily dewormers, and grooming products, and choose those that don't have to end up in the landfill when the contents are gone. For other recyclables, such as paper, soda cans, bottles, glass and plastics, set up bins in the barn that make sorting easy and accessible.

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More Health



Allergy Season and Your Horse's Health Care

Summer shouldn't mean nonstop itching, rubbing and biting. If the thought of sunny summer horseback riding is clouded by memories of bumps, hives, sores, itching, coughing, wheezing, runny eyes, and headshaking, take action now... | [read](#)

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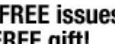
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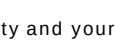
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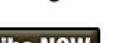
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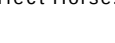
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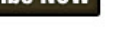
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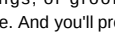
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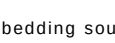
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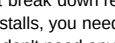
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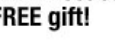
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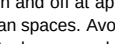
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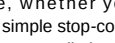
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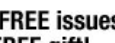
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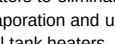
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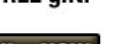
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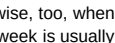
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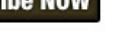
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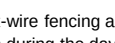
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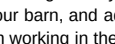
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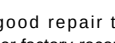
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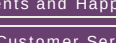
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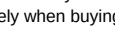
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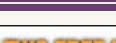
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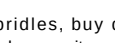
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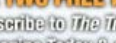
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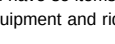
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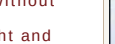
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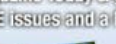
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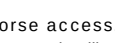
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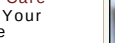
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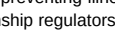
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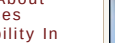
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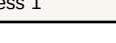
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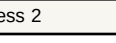
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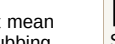
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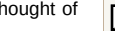
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Story by [Karen Briggs](#)

Protect yourself, your horse, your property and your planet with these ideas from the readers and editors of Perfect Horse.

5. Buy in bulk, whether it's hay, grain, shavings, or grooming supplies. You'll reduce packaging, processing and transportation waste. And you'll probably also save some money, too.
6. Limit use of bedding, select a renewable bedding source, and choose those that are the most earth friendly, i.e., those that break down readily in the environment and add nutrients back into the soil. Remember, in matted stalls, you need just enough bedding to absorb urine. If your horse lives outside, you probably don't need any bedding at all.
7. Automate power sources to reduce energy consumption in your barn. Install a light timer to make sure indoor and outdoor lights go on and off at appropriate times, and use an automated thermostat in the tack room and other human spaces. Avoid overheating these areas, too. Around 68-degrees is nice in the house, but your tack room probably doesn't need to be that warm.
8. Reduce water use in the barn and pasture, whether you're hydrating horses or washing up after them. Place a nozzle with a simple stop-cock on your horse-washing hose to stop flow when not in use. Install automatic waters to eliminate tank overflow when forgotten hoses are left running. You'll also reduce evaporation and use less electricity in the cold months than you will with stock tanks and conventional tank heaters. Scrub water troughs whenever they get low to keep them clean. Be water-wise, too, when it comes to irrigating pastures and paddocks-a couple of inches of water a week is usually plenty.
9. Go solar. Use solar-powered units to fire your hot-wire fencing and outdoor lighting. Inside barns and covered arenas, let the natural light shine in during the day. Install strategically place translucent "skylights" in the roof and side panels of your barn, and add windows and doors where practical to reduce the number of lights you need when working in the barn during daylight hours.
10. Keep your truck, trailer and tractors in good repair to improve fuel economy and emissions. That means keeping tires inflated per factory recommendations and performing regular tune-ups, even for off-road vehicles. Shop wisely when buying a truck and trailer-be safe but don't over-rig yourself.
11. From buckets to barn tools, saddles to bridles, buy quality equipment even if it costs a bit more. Then, take care of what you have so items don't end up in the landfill. When you're done with it, donate good-quality tack, equipment and riding apparel to your local saddle club, so someone else can use and enjoy it.
12. Protect wetlands by not allowing your horse access. You'll help save wetland life, including fish, insects and microorganisms, while also preventing illnesses, such as fungal infections, in your horses. Contact your county or township regulators for advice regarding buffer zones near wetlands.

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Allergy Season and Your Horse's Health Care
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