



Horse Care Info Sheet

Overseeding Tips

Introduction

Don't sweat over overseeding in the summer. Taking on this task during summer's end/early fall or early spring means fewer weed seeds will be germinating and competing for nutrients.

Some Considerations

1. Get soil tested to see if the paddock needs fertilizer and fertilize accordingly.
2. Let horses overgraze the paddock. Mow any tall grass or weeds they've avoided. This will help minimize competition from the other existing plants.
3. Drag the paddock. Dragging is important to scratch the surface of the soil. Dragging also helps disperse nutrients and kills parasites from any manure that hasn't been removed. Only drag in hot, dry weather, and when horses are rotated out.
4. Decide which forage species you will use. Purchase endophyte free seed, especially if broodmares use the paddock. Look for paddock varieties of seed mixes as these are usually labelled as certified endophyte free.
5. If overseeding in the fall – Aim for a time when weeds are less active but soil moisture is still available. Dragging the paddock again after overseeding may give seeds a better shot at establishment. If overseeding in the early spring (frost seeding) – Wait until daytime temperatures are above 0°C, but night time temperatures still fall below 0 °C.
6. Do not allow horses back into overseeded paddocks until the seedlings have established themselves. If possible, keep horses off overseeded paddocks until late summer. If this is not possible during winter months, keep horses off muddy and wet paddocks (at minimum) to reduce damage to the plants.
7. Congratulate yourself for taking an active role in pasture management!



*Pasture with bare patches—
a good candidate for overseeding.*

Conclusions

For more information, check out OMAFRA's fact sheets on [Managing Horse Pastures](#) and [Frost Seeding](#) and Equine Guelph's [Pasture Management](#) fact sheet.

Equine Guelph is the horse owner and caregiver's Centre at the University of Guelph, supported and overseen by equine industry groups, dedicated to improving the health and well-being of horses.