

Ohio State University Extension

Extension Equine Pasture Walks:

Blending Hands-On Learning with Hybrid Education to Improve Pasture Management

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Identified Need

Many horse owners lack formal training in pasture and forage management, leading to overgrazing, weed pressure, mud issues, reduced pasture longevity, and negative impacts on horse health and the environment.

Program Goal

To increase participant knowledge and confidence in pasture management through interactive pasture walks and complementary online education, supporting sustainable equine operations through hands-on experiences to online education.

Topics

- Plant/root Physiology
- Mud management / dry lot
- Grazing sticks and forage calculations
- Weed Id and poisonous plants

Valued Experiences

- On-site pasture walk
- Hands on demonstrations (grazing sticks, soil sampling)
- Take home fact sheets
- Continued education through online courses
- Personal and skilled instructions within the community

Locations

- Ashtabula County - Grand Haven Stable
- Clermont County - Grassy Acres Horse Retreat
- Wayne County - OSU ATI Equine Center



Promotion and Resources

Equine Pasture Walks
Join us for a unique, statewide hands-on learning experience focused on equine pasture management. This intensive tour takes place on a working horse pasture—perfect for seeing best practices in action, bringing your questions and curiosity as we explore how to create healthier, more productive grazing environments for your horses!

- Plant/root physiology
- Mud management / dry lots
- Grazing sticks and forage calculations
- Weed ID and poisonous plants

Light refreshments served at 5:30 PM at each location. No RSVP required. Free for all to attend.

DATE: July 27th Wayne County, OSU ATI
August 20th Clermont County
September 27th Ashtabula County

TIME: 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Please come to join us that is closest to you, or feel free to visit different series throughout Ohio!

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Horse Zoom Series
The Equine Extension Team and Forages for Horses group are working together to bring you the 2025/2026 webinar series.

Forages for Horses
Register here: go.osu.edu/foragesforhorses2025

- October 15th** Horse Hay Evaluations - Christine Gelley
- November 19th** Pasture Associated Laminitis Risk - Sara Mastellar, PhD
- December 17th** Managing Soil Fertility in Pastures - Dr. Emma Matcham

Forages for Horses Webinar Series and Online Course

Horse Zoom Series
Free and open to the public. Registration: go.osu.edu/equinezoomseries25

- January 21st** Emergencies with horses and annual wellness ideas, keeping/establishing a VCPR - Dr. Shaver & Janessa Hill
- February 18th** Trailering Safety: Preparing to reach your destination. - Amanda Barnum
- March 18th** Protecting Your Equine Partner: Understanding and Preventing Tick-Borne Illnesses - Dr. Tim McDermott & Dr. Antoinette Marsh

Webinars are hosted via Zoom (12:00-1:00 PM EST). Speaker Registration on back.

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Horse Pasture Ideal Grazing Height Guide

In mixed pasture, use the height representing most of the plants to determine when to start grazing. Use the height of the most sensitive species for the stop grazing and pre-frost heights (the tallest member of the mix).

Start grazing	Stop grazing	Regrowth before killing frost
6-10" Tall fescue, Timothy, & Orchardgrass	4" Red Clover	4" Red Clover
6-10" Ladino (White) Clover with clovers present	4" Tall fescue & Orchardgrass	4" Tall fescue & Orchardgrass
4-6" KY Bluegrass	5" Timothy	5" Timothy
14" of the Red Clover buds are blooming	4" KY Bluegrass & Ladino (White) Clover	4" KY Bluegrass & Ladino (White) Clover
3" Timothy & Red Clover	4" KY Bluegrass & Ladino (White) Clover	4" KY Bluegrass & Ladino (White) Clover
2" KY Bluegrass & Ladino (White) Clover		

By Emma Matcham & Sara L. Mastellar
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Collaboration



Suzanne Westlake from Ashtabula County Soil and Water District presentation.



The 2025 curriculum and hands-on programming were developed collaboratively by members of the Ohio State University Integrated Forage Management Team and the OSU Extension Equine Team.

Contributors included county-based Extension educators, statewide Extension specialists, and Ohio State Agricultural Technical Institute (ATI) faculty.

Future Development

- Future Focus:**
- Expand digital accessibility
 - Integrate advanced forage assessment tools
 - Refine curriculum based on participant feedback

- Planned Enhancements:**
- Develop short, topic-specific video demonstrations
 - Add interactive elements to online modules
 - Offer advanced-level pasture walks or regional workshops

- Long-Term Goals:**
- Broaden program reach across Ohio
 - Pursue multi-state collaborations to strengthen equine forage education in the Midwest.

101 Participants across the state

16 Professionals in collaboration

Key Highlights

Participant feedback indicated increased knowledge of pasture species selection, grazing management, and facility design strategies that improve pasture longevity and reduce environmental impacts. Many participants reported improved confidence in evaluating their own pastures and implementing sustainable management practices. This program demonstrates the effectiveness of combining hands-on Extension education with flexible online learning tools to meet the needs of modern horse owners.

"Amazing program and fantastic, super helpful participants. I appreciated the opportunity to ask questions of several presenters. Thank you!"

"So much great information. Especially about grass selection and all weather paddocks. Good information on identifying what is in my pasture."

