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# Equine Pasture Management Calendar

**Winter – December, January, February**

- Paddocks should not be over stocked to avoid poaching and damage to existing grass.
- Areas that do become poached should be fenced off to avoid too much compaction and water logged ground i.e. around gateways.
- Soil analysis can take place in winter to access pH and soil nutrients.

**Spring – March, April**

- When the ground has dried enough chain harrow the pasture, this removes any dead grass, evens out poached areas and allows air to the grass to help with spring growth.
- An assessment of the field should be carried out to decide if the grass would benefit from over seeding or if the field may need to be reseeded.
- Fertiliser can be applied in spring when the grass begins to grow. Seek expert advice on what your requirements are, ensure slow releasing fertiliser is used to avoid problems with laminitis.
- If over-seeding is not required roll the pasture when the conditions are dry enough. This will encourage tillering of the grass plants and encourage a healthy root structure.

**Spring - Over seeding**

- Prepare the ground following the recommendations from the soil analysis.
- If there is a severe weed problem consider spraying the pasture to control the broad leafed weeds.
- The timing of the over-seeding is important as it is not advised when grass is growing vigorously (May, June). The ideal time to sow is between March and April, when ground temperature should be above 6°C. The pasture should have been cut or grazed hard before sowing.
- If the sward is open the seed can be broadcast by hand after chain harrowing. If a large area is being over seeded a drill may be used but the grass seed must not be planted too deeply.
- After seeding the ground should be consolidated either by rolling or by grazing with sheep.
- Nitrogen application should not occur until the new grass has established.
- Horses can be turned out approximately 6 weeks after over seeding but only to lightly graze.

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