



## Will a Busy Holiday Schedule Disrupt Your Horse's Routine?

By Dr. Robert E. Bray, Star Milling's Equine Nutritionist

It's not uncommon for the hustle and bustle of the holidays to disrupt our regular horse care routine. Horses are very much creatures of habit, but they are adaptable within reason. So what is reasonable when it comes to making changes?

**Reasonable:** Feeding one hour earlier or later than usual, although you should feed at the same time whenever possible. Using hay nets or slow feeders can extend the time hay is available during the day.

Do not feed 3-4 hours outside of the usual time. This will increase how long your horse's stomach is empty and can upset their digestion.

**Reasonable:** Cutting short daily turn-out or exercise.

Do not increase workload intensity to make up for a shortened schedule. Be consistent.

**Reasonable:** Mucking stalls quickly to just pick up the "big stuff."

Do not allow manure to pile up. Skipping one daily clean up may cause your stall to need a total and thorough stripping later on.

**Reasonable:** Always check the water source DAILY. Do not ignore your horse's most vital resource. Ideal water temperature is 50° – 65° F because horses drink less when the water is too cold.

**Reasonable:** Check on your horse DAILY. There are no short-cuts here either! Look for changes with food or water consumption and regularity in manure.

Please look over this list, and check it twice. And we hope you and yours have a Christmas that's nice!



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