

# Equine Dentistry in Kentucky



# Equine Dental Provider

- Non veterinarians
- Training
  - Dental programs
  - Apprenticeship





# Kentucky Equine Dentistry Issues

- Falls under the definition of veterinary medicine.
- Large animal veterinarian shortage in Kentucky.
- Horse and owner needs unmet.
- Lack of standard of care guidelines for Kentucky.
- No training or performance standards are required or accepted.
- Our estimate is 50-75 Equine Dental Providers in Kentucky.

# Equine Dentistry Basics

- Basic, routine and accepted animal husbandry practice.
- Unless an extraction is required, the procedure is safe and painless.
- 209,500 horses in Kentucky. 2022 UK and Kentucky Horse Counsel survey.
- Best management practices- annual to biannual dental.
- 72 out of 120 counties have large animal veterinary shortage. National institute of food and agriculture
- American Association of Equine Practitioners reports 6% of 4,000 graduates persue equine practice. 50% leave within 5 years.
- 240 new equine vets annually in the U.S. 60 equine vets retire annually and 24 quit horses. Little hope for rural Kentucky.
- Most equine vets are either too busy or dislike performing dentals.

# Ever erupting teeth

- Horse teeth continually erupt.
- Continuously erupting and wearing teeth create sharp points, sores and malocclusions.









**Acute Pain Lacerations**



**06 Malocclusions**





# Reason for dentistry

- Comfort of horse at rest.
- Comfort of horse while eating.
- Comfort of horse while riding.
- Comfort of owner living with a comfortable horse.
- Unnatural environmental conditions necessitate more frequent dentals.



# Horse stats

Koostra, et.al.

- 2.61% of horses have no malocclusions
- 93% of horses have 2 or more malocclusions
- 100% of horses develop sharp enamel points
- Dentition is correlated to body condition  $p < 0.01$
- Dentition is correlated to TMJ pain  $\text{coc } 0.6$



- Dentistry is safe. Vet Board complaints involving animal harm during dentistry are almost nonexistent in Kentucky.
- Similar to farrier work on feet. Removing problematic overgrowth.



# History of Equine Dentistry

- The earliest account of equine dentistry was 1150 BC.
- Many Cavalry horses had dentals during the Civil War.
- The first U.S. veterinary school was established in 1879. Iowa State
- WW1 and WW2 laws required horses to have dentals in Europe.



# Our Goals

- Avenue to legally work in Kentucky.
- Equine Dentistry to be reclassified as routine animal husbandry.
- Let the owners have the right to choose the practitioner of his or her choice.