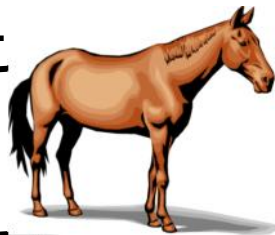


Notes from....



Serrano Creek Ranch Equestrian Center

DECEMBER 2008

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Back before when I was young(er), I was a cook in a restaurant. Bob the manager would always scold us if we didn't measure the food we were preparing. Thanks to the powers of PTSD, those endless harangues are hard wired into my brain.

Ever since I first immigrated through the gates of Serrano, the portion control homily has hounded me. Customers should receive what they paid for, while at the same time making sure that the customer pay the correct price for what they ordered. For years whether one paid for a half or full flake, they basically got a full flake. The problem resides in that it is very difficult to break a flake of hay in half. The act of baling compresses the individual stems of hay to the point to where they are interlocked. Rather than try to tear apart this woven mass, it just easier to toss the whole flake.

One of the side effects of the composting process was for the first time I became very observant of the components of the material. For hours I would watch the manure and shavings components of the compost pass through the screen. On the other hand large amounts of uneaten hay (which was too big to pass through) piled up at the end of the screen. It became very apparent that a significant amount of hay was not going through its intended target, i.e. a mouth.

Instead of trying to tear a flake in half, why not cut the flakes in half? Then the idea of cutting bales in half with a saw popped up. This worked well. But there were those occasional flakes that were undersized, and then when cut in half produced an undersized feeding.

The ultimate problem is that historically we have relied on hay balers to tell us what a flake was. And depending on how the machine was setup, a flake could vary considerably. The best answer was to actually weigh each feeding so that you get what you pay for. If this portion control can work in restaurants, why shouldn't it work at the Serrano cafe? In fact it has worked beyond our wildest expectations (1/2 = 5-6 pounds, Full = 9-10 pounds).

By putting scales on the feed cart and weighing each horse's feed, the problem of the subjectivity of your horse's feed is now a non-issue. For the workers, their lives are much easier because they have clear guidelines of what is correct. While weighing does add more time to the feeding routine, the complaints of the SCR staff's subjectivity have evaporated. By feeding a regular, measured quantity, you'll now have a good indication if your horse is off. Before, your horse may have been feeling poorly, or the feeding crew were just over feeding that day.

As a review of the past feeding program, customers that received non-SCR feed had a box paced in front of the stall, and either the store, or someone else, would fill the box. The SCR staff would come along and feed from the contents from the box. Recently SCR took over selling bales of orchard and timothy itself.

Now that we have a system that has proven to be successful and accurate, we're ready to expand it to include feeding timothy and orchard from the feed wagon. The advantages for you over buying individual bales are: 1) Your bale is no longer "available" for others, 2) You won't have "that" box in front of your stall (though some horses will miss the raising and dropping the lid), and 3) you'll save 5% off your feeding costs if you change over from the retail bale program. Below is the rate for SCR to feed from our stock. On the right is the cost for the same weight if you bought through retail bale program. Of course for those who wish to provide their own feed or wish to purchase by the bale, the current program will remain in effect.

	Orchard- SCR Feed	Orchard-Bales
1/2	52	55
Full	86	91
	Timothy- SCR Feed	Timothy-Bales
1/2	56	60
Full	93	99

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You may have seen some strange appendages on top of Dr. P's roof. We'll, you're right if you guessed that it was a weather station. And why is there a weather station at your stable? How else would you know that we've received .18" of rain this season and that the highest wind gust so far has been 26.8 mph, and that occurred on November 14 at 2:01 in the afternoon? The answer is obviously you wouldn't—and would remain in the dark if I hadn't told you.



Other than an unhealthy obsession with Jackie Johnson, there is real purpose. First, it helps fill newsletters with mindless graphs, charts, and tables, so that the actual amount of writing is minimized. Secondly, we will be able to develop a model to monitor the fans that blow air into the compost piles. Under certain atmospheric conditions,

we're more likely to produce odors that may be annoying to our neighbors, and it would be better to reduce the amount of fouled air that is released during that time. Just like politics, all weather is local.



Vinton Gray "Vint" Cerf^[1] (IPA: [\[sɜːf\]](#); born [June 23, 1943](#)) is an [American computer scientist](#) who is the "person most often called '[the father of the Internet](#)'

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As was noted in July, orchard and timothy are sold under "market price" system. As of December 1, 2008 the per bale prices (average weight 99.5 lbs) are:

Orchard: \$27.50 + tax
 Timothy: \$30.17 + tax

These prices are good for the time we have this shipment (approximately 4 months). SCR fed prices will also be adjust accordingly.

As noted in the July 2008, boarding prices will adjust on January 1st– yuck!

After much foot dragging, the stable now has a web site www.serranocreekranch.com. Pages that might be of interest to you are past newsletters (of course!), photos of past events, calendar / notices, and the professionals telephone #'s page. What the site still lacks are photos about life here at Serrano. Do you have a favorite photos(s) or have results of a recent competition that you'd like to share? Everyone sees Serrano differently, and your photos will give your perspective. Just e-mail them and we'll include them over time. At the time of this newsletter, the site is so new, few search engines have picked it up. For the time being, it is best to use the actual address. Oh by-the-way this is a work in progress.

Special congratulations to Kathie Dunn for "Miss P" aka "Spurwing's Superfine Lady" for becoming a celebrity by winning the 2008 United States Federation Saddlebred Western Pleasure Horse of the Year for the United states Region!!!