

Alice's Blog July/August

Hi everybody, Its Alice the Pony,

It sure has been hot lately! Did you know that horses and ponies feel the effects of the heat faster than humans do? That is why my humans do lots of things to keep me and my little brother Oliver cool when it is really hot out.

I have shade in my grass field and also in the paddock that my stall opens into. This allows me to get out of the sun when I need to. My little brother Oliver sometimes takes up all the shade under the trees, so I just shove in and tell him to move over! During the very hottest part of the day my humans put us in our paddocks which are really shady and then let us out again later in the early evening when it is starting to cool off. Lots of horses get to stay outside all night long which would be exciting, but too scary for my little brother Oliver because he is a little afraid of the dark.

We need lots of cool water to drink at all times, but in the Summer it is even more important for us to be able to drink as much as we can. My humans say that we have to stay "hydrated" which is a fancy way to say we need lots of water. Does your Mom or Dad tell you to drink lots during the hot summer? It is just as important for humans to drink lots of water when it is hot as it is for horses and ponies to drink. My humans also clean out my water buckets and scrub them almost every day. They do this to keep the water clean (much nicer to drink!) and not to let any dirt or grass mess up the water and grow germy bugs. It is really important to change the water because sometimes there are mosquito eggs that grow and hatch in water that is left unchanged. Then we have lots of mosquitos around biting us Ponies and the humans too. No one likes itchy mosquito bites.

My little brother Oliver gets a hose shower after he works if he is sweaty. It helps cool him off and at the same time, keeps him clean. It also washes the sweat off his body so he doesn't have dry caked sweat on his coat. I like to have showers too, but I only get them when I am dirty or it is really hot out. It is a bit like running through the water hose like I have seen some of the kids in the neighbourhood do.

Flies are a problem in the summer too. We wear fly masks to keep them from going on our faces and eyes. The masks are really nice and we can see really well with them on. Some horses wear mesh fly blankets to keep the flies off their bodies. Our humans also spray fly spray on us which the flies don't like and it makes them stay away. We use our tails to swish the flies away from our bodies. Horses and Ponies often stand together and swish their tails to keep the flies away from each other. It is really nice when you have a super long tail. My tail is not so long as I was stepping on it and my humans cut it a bit. Flies are annoying but even worse is that flies can lay their eggs on horses and ponies. Yuck! I do not want to have fly eggs on me. The eggs are from bot flies and they usually lay them on our lower legs. We can also pick up the eggs from tall grass. The eggs are really small and yellow. Once when I did get bot eggs on me my humans shaved them off with a safety razor. You should make sure that an adult human uses the safety razor so that you don't hurt yourself with it. You do not want to leave the eggs on horses and ponies because we might accidentally lick them and then we get "worms" in our tummies. Having worms is not good because they make us feel bad and sometimes make us really sick so that the vet has to come out and take care of us. Our humans give us "wormer" which is a syringe paste that we have to swallow. It is medicine that gets any worms or bugs out of our bodies. I do not like the wormer and even though I know it is to help me, I make a fuss about it. My little brother Oliver puts his head up really high so the humans can hardly reach his mouth to worm him. I laugh at him because they always find a way

to make him swallow the worming medicine. Secretly I wish I was his height so that I could give my humans a hard time too.

I hope you are all having a great Summer, and I will talk to you all soon.

Love Alice the Pony.