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A Tradition of Leadership and Excellence in Equine Medicine

**Reminders for pregnant mare management
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Now that breeding season is over, it is easy to kick the mares that are believed to be in foal out to pasture and forget about them. This practice could lead to unpleasant surprises next spring! The following are a couple of reminders for the "off season":

1. Have your mare's pregnancy status checked at least once after 6 months of gestation. Mares bred between February and June (with varying breeding dates) can be checked together in the late fall and/or very early winter. Mares that were once in foal, even at 90 days, may not show obvious signs of abortion and will be assumed to be pregnant unless palpation reveals otherwise.
2. Pregnancy check barren mares especially if you have not noticed normal cycling. Some mares may have been pronounced open on an early exam but are actually pregnant. This is very important to know before any inadvertent prostaglandin injections are given next breeding season.
3. Remember to vaccinate for Rhinopneumonitis. This is an important cause of abortion that still occurs and the prevention is often forgotten. Mares should receive boosters during their 5th, 7th, and 9th month of gestation. A killed vaccine should be used.
4. Feed mares their normal ration until the third trimester (after 220 days), then gradually increase the ration towards lactation requirements. Observe for excessive weight gain, this can increase the incidence of dystocia (difficulty in foaling). Also observe for poor body condition to address the cause before lactation drains them even more.

These simple steps are often forgotten and can prevent further complications.