

Any horse wearing equipment, or tethered for grazing, needs to be checked regularly.

Horses need a lot of exercise, and they have a strong flight response when they think they are in danger. It is best you don't tether horses for long periods of time.

When tethering for grazing, even for a short while, horses need shelter, especially if it's very hot or cold. They also need a constant supply of water. Use equipment that is clean and fitted correctly to your horse, to avoid injury and to ensure the horse can breathe and drink properly.



■ **Horses**  
A 'bit' of advice

## ■ For more information

Many of the regulations come from the codes of welfare. These set out minimum standards and recommended best practices when caring for animals. Codes that may be relevant to you include:

- dairy cattle
- deer
- dogs
- goats
- horses and donkeys
- llamas and alpacas
- pigs
- sheep and beef cattle
- transport within NZ

You can find the regulations, our guidance on the regulations, and the codes of welfare on our website at [www.mpi.govt.nz/animalregs](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/animalregs)

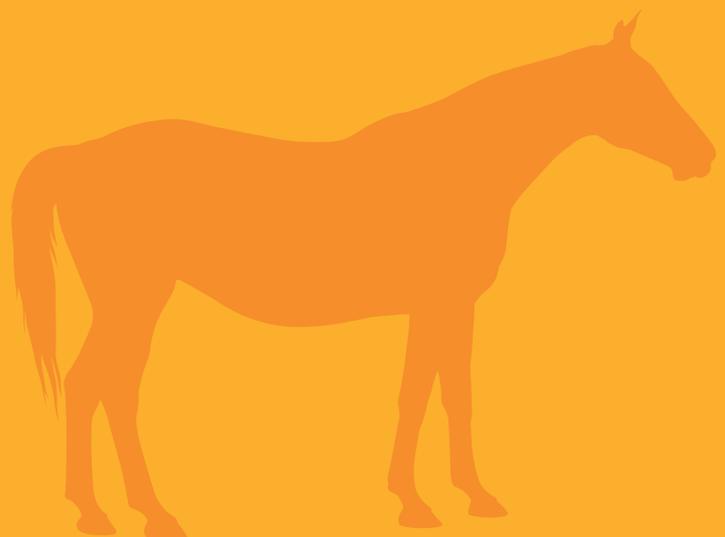
Ministry for Primary Industries  
Manatū Ahu Matua



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## Animal Welfare Regulations

# Horses



Owning animals comes with a responsibility to provide for their care and wellbeing. Take some time to find out what your animals need by checking the codes of welfare and regulations. Regulations make it easier for MPI to take action against animal mistreatment. Fines for breaching animal welfare regulations start at \$300 for individuals and go up to \$25,000 for businesses. Some breaches may also result in a criminal conviction.

If an animal's welfare is seriously compromised, higher penalties under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 apply.

Are you doing it right? Encourage others to check too at

[www.mpi.govt.nz/animalregs](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/animalregs)

Email us your questions to [animalwelfare@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:animalwelfare@mpi.govt.nz)

Call us about an animal welfare issue on **0800 00 83 33**



## ■ Tethering for grazing

### Free rein

Horses require lots of **exercise** and are **social** – they shouldn't be tethered for long periods of time.

If you must tether your horse for grazing, it must have constant access to:

- ✓ water – especially in the summer when pasture is dry
- ✓ food
- ✓ shade and shelter to provide protection from extremes of heat and cold.

**Shelter** includes appropriate covers, natural barriers such as trees or hills, shade cloth or built structures.

Tether material should be soft so the horse won't be injured if it gets tangled.

- ! Check your horse regularly and ensure it has time off the tether every day.

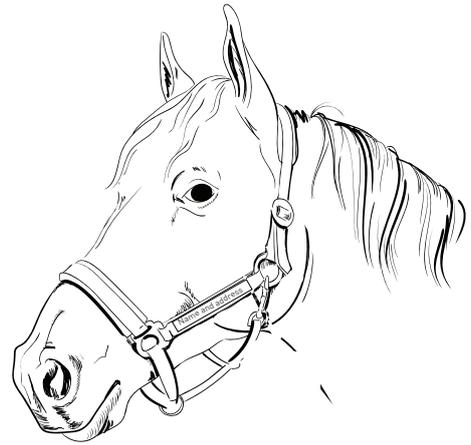
## ■ Dentistry

Extracting horse teeth can be **complicated and painful**. It must be done by someone who is competent and uses the right equipment.

A competent non-veterinarian (e.g., equine dental technician) may extract a:

- ✓ finger-loose baby tooth or
- ✓ a wolf tooth, using pain relief authorised by a veterinarian.

Any other type of tooth extraction, or tooth cutting, can only be done by a **veterinarian**.



## ■ Equipment

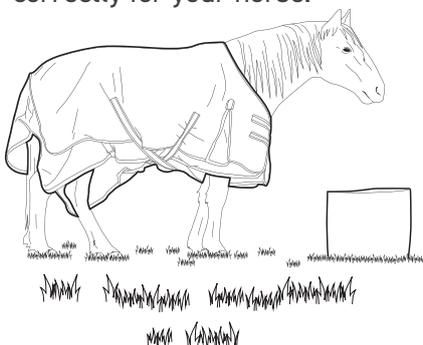
### Top gear

The equipment you use on your horse, such as halters, bridles, saddles, lead ropes, bits and nosebands must:

- ✗ not cause injuries, cuts or abrasions, or swelling around the head and neck
- ✓ allow your horse to breathe and drink normally.

It's important to:

- ✓ check your horse daily if it's wearing equipment such as a halter or cover
- ✓ keep equipment clean
- ✓ ensure saddles and covers are fitted correctly for your horse.



## ■ Castration

### In a nutshell

Castration is a painful, surgical procedure that must only be carried out by a **veterinarian using pain relief**.

## ■ Freeze branding

Freeze branding must only be done by someone who is competent and uses the right equipment.

Recommended best practice when freeze branding is to:

- ✓ use pain relief
- ✓ closely shave the brand site, and
- ✓ use liquid nitrogen, rather than dry ice, as the brand is applied to the skin for a shorter period, with a similar result.