Infectious disease-control programs are important to protect the health of your horse. A healthy horse will produce and perform better than one that is not feeling well.

Many factors influence the health of a horse – feeding, pasture management, dental care, parasite control, training and exercise, housing, fly control, sanitation, and other practices. They all interact in the overall effectiveness of a disease-control program.

Vaccination is an important part of horse disease management. Consult your veterinarian to develop a comprehensive vaccination program that is appropriate to your situation and geographic location. Foals should begin their vaccination program at 6 months of age.

West Nile virus was detected in 13 of Wyoming’s 23 counties in 2005, but it is a risk for horses in all counties.

Adult horses require two doses of a vaccine 30 days apart for the initial series, while weanlings require three doses. After the first year, all horses require at least one annual booster. Some veterinarians are recommending a booster in the spring and again in late summer.

Influenza is one of the most common infectious respiratory diseases of horses. This disease is highly contagious and spreads rapidly through groups of horses. Vaccination against influenza is highly recommended for all horses, especially those with significant exposure to horses from outside facilities such as those for breeding, racing, boarding, ropings, shows, and other events.

Equine encephalomyelitis (also known as sleeping sickness, EEE, WEE, VEE) is transmitted by mosquitoes and other blood-sucking insects. This disease is not directly contagious from horse to horse. Vaccination against sleeping sickness is highly effective and recommended for all horses. An annual booster is required.

Wyoming Hay List

The University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service offers an Internet-based hay listing service free to Wyoming citizens! The list is at www.uwyo.edu/ces/haylist/

If you are looking to buy hay, you can search the list by hay type and geographic location. If you have hay or feed to sell, you can post a listing on the Web site using the online form or by contacting Kathy Parsons at (307) 754-2223, or e-mail her at kparsons@uwyo.edu.

Dallas Mount is an extension educator for the University of Wyoming in Goshen, Laramie, and Platte counties and can be reached at (307) 322-3667 or dmount@uwyo.edu.