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## ALABAMA REIN-Regional Equine Information Network Training Program

There is no doubt about it, horses are big business in and around Walker County from trail riding at Whittemore Farm to rodeo and competitive riding events at local arenas such as AAA, Boldo and Lupton Saddle clubs, and others to wild west reenactments at Old York USA in Oakman to the numerous individual pleasure horse owners around the county. Numerous local businesses also sell horse feed, tack, medical supplies, fencing materials, and other horse related items. There are individuals that provide services for horses such as shoeing, veterinary services, riding lessons, and training. The economic impact from all these activities related to horses is very significant in Walker County.

With all the horse-related activity, there's a need for training. Horse care requires a great deal of knowledge and skill, most of it very specialized to horses. Many horse owners have to spend years getting the experience needed to do a good job of horse care. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is offering a special class that could help horse owners get some of the knowledge needed to be successful horse owners. This class is called Alabama REIN. REIN is short for Regional Equine Information Network. The ten-part course will cover all aspects of horse ownership. Each three-hour session will focus on a particular aspect of horse ownership and care, and each session will be taught by a leading expert. The class will be of value to beginning and experienced horse owners alike. It is also a great opportunity for those involved in equine related businesses.

Some of the subjects that will be covered in-depth include: Basic Conformation, Equine Nutrition, Equine Breeding and Genetics, Forage Production, Equine Behavior, Training, Reproduction, Equine Herd Health, Fitness, Equine Business Management, and Facility Safety.

The distance learning course will be offered at many locations in Alabama. Here in Northwest Alabama, some of the nearby locations will include Cullman, Winfield, Tuscaloosa, and Florence. The classes will begin on Monday, October 2, 2006, and will continue through November 2nd. For a brochure and application, call my office at (205) 221-3392. You may also visit [www.alabamahorsecouncil.org](http://www.alabamahorsecouncil.org) for a link to a registration form that you can print. We also have links to the registration form posted on our website at [www.aces.edu/counties/Walker](http://www.aces.edu/counties/Walker) . I will be assisting the Winston and Marion County Offices in conducting the course at the Upper Coastal Plains Research Station in Winfield. The course will be offered through interactive video technology that will allow two-way communication with the instructors at Auburn.

The cost of the class is \$100, which includes a course book, access to the 30 hour program, cap, completion certificate, and 2007 membership dues to the Alabama Horse Council.

## Home Lawn Weed Control Loses Another Tool In the Arsenal

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has announced its decision that all uses of the organic arsenic herbicides -- MSMA, DSMA, CAMA, and cacodylic acid -- are not eligible for reregistration. The Agency's primary concern is the potential for applied organic arsenical products to transform to a more toxic inorganic form of arsenic in soil and subsequently be transported to drinking water.

The Agency's risk assessment, supported by field monitoring data in both surface and ground water, estimates levels of inorganic arsenic in drinking water from the pesticide use that raise a concern for cancer risk. Given this risk, EPA has determined that the tolerances for the organic arsenic herbicides do not meet the safety standard of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA). In addition, because there are readily available alternatives, EPA believes continued registration of the organic arsenic herbicides will pose an unreasonable risk under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

The element arsenic is found naturally in the environment. Through erosion and industrial activities, arsenic is transported into water, air, food, and soil. As a result, people are exposed to small amounts of arsenic every single day. EPA and other federal and state

agencies have regulations in place that aim to reduce or limit arsenic exposure to individuals. In light of these facts, and given that alternative herbicides are readily available, EPA believes additional exposure to arsenic from the organic arsenic herbicides is unnecessary.

The organic arsenic herbicides are used primarily on zoysia and bermuda turf grasses, including golf courses, home lawns, recreational areas such as school yards and athletic fields, and rights-of-way. Overall, use of organic arsenate products in the U.S. appears to be declining, and alternative weed control products to replace MSMA are available.