**H-B Testing Report from 2023**

To anyone thinking about taking the test, work on your record book ahead of time and have it reviewed using the checklist found online. Be detailed - think having a back up to everything. Use a commercial dewormer? Include the box or a print out. Use vaccines? Include the manufacturer print out. Had a vet expense? Include the invoice. Feed a supplement, grain, or concentrate? Include a copy of the label.

For your Land Conservation Project - pick something that is beneficial to your club and your community. Try to involve other equestrians if you can. Take Before and After photos and include them in your write up. Something as simple as a riding area clean up can meet the qualifications. Be sure to read the checklist on the project write up and include each of the listed components.

For Conditioning Plan, have someone review it to the checklist found online. Read thru the section in the C manual that tells you what changes should be in there for week-to-week. Then also read the section in HB about what vocabulary components need to be in there. Aim for simple, yet effective. Don't overcomplicate it. And then when you think you got it right, submit it online thru the National NE Feedback Program. Have an NE look it over and give you any suggestions.

Do the same process as above for the required Lesson Plans. It makes a difference. You don't want to travel all that way and have a DNMS that could have been avoided ahead of time.

That's another thing - work on your HB requirements ahead of time. Like start now if you want to take your HB next year. Plan to be "done" with everything you need at least 30 days before your test date. This way you can just brush up on your knowledge instead of stressing out about what you've got to squish into that 'Last Minute'. Plus, you don't get the list of which 10 Poisonous Plants they are going to use for the test until about 3 weeks before the exam. Trying to memorize everything you need to about all 20 plants would be pretty difficult. Tatem found flashcards to be very helpful for this section as testers had noted they would use the stock photos found on the USPC website document.

Oh, an unexpected hurdle for Tatem was the Feed and Bedding section. You had to be able to identify different types of local feed and bedding options, be familiar w/seasonal availability, and also local costs. Being from a completely different region, this was difficult as there were options that we'd never seen and had no idea on what seasonal impacts and costs were. Tatem did her best to work thru these sections, and was also very good to use redirectional phrases such as "I believe this to be a (X) type of hay, which might be a primary roughage feed for a horse in this region, likely harvested from fields, similar to the alfalfa fed in the Southwest Regional, which is usually baled in 80-100 # bales at a cost of about $25/ea, for a monthly feed cost of an average horse in average work of $200/mo." She might not have been able to properly identify the X type of feed, but she was able to demonstrate an understanding of the applied knowledge behind feed. Same for bedding. Like we don't use peat moss, can't even begin to estimate the cost or availability, but it was on the list for the HB. But Tatem did have an understanding on how much a bag of pine flakes cost, how many went in a 12x12 stall, and how often they were changed out to estimate a monthly cost of using them as a bedding. We use grindings, and she was able to say how much a load cost, how many stalls we bedded with them, how often we changed it out, and how long a load lasted.

Hope this helps! It was all new territory for Tatem and I, so I'm hoping this might help the next member looking to follow these steps.