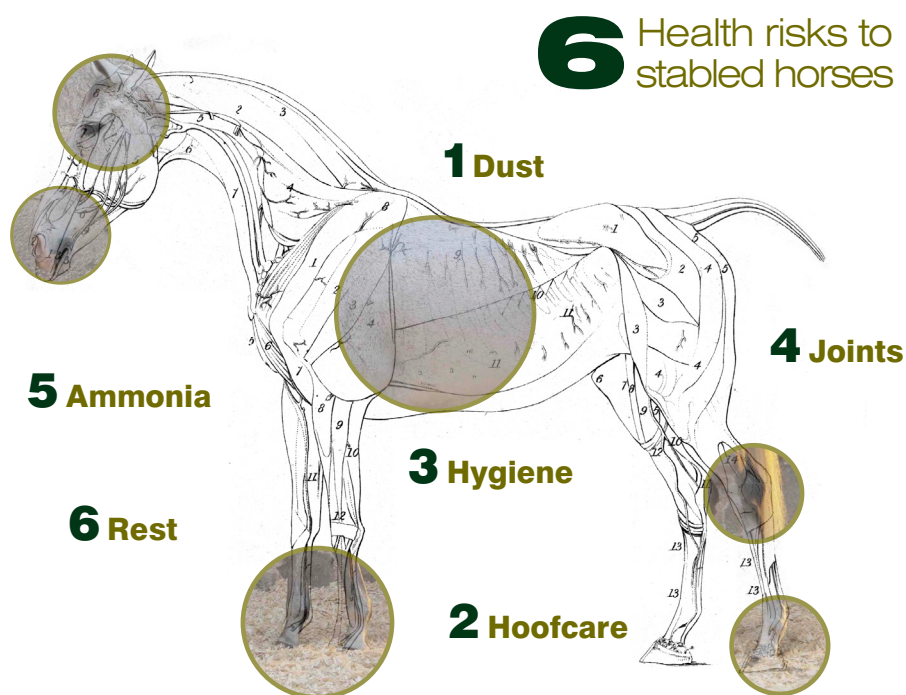


# BEDMAX



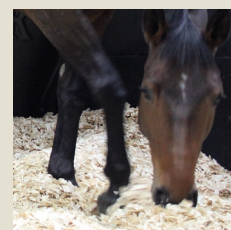
By Appointment to  
Her Majesty The Queen  
Manufacturer of Horse Bedding  
Bedmax Limited Northumberland

BEDDING FOR BETTER HEALTH & WELFARE



## Hoofcare

Keeping hooves in good condition can be tricky, but bedding can help.



## Hygiene

Bedding can also play a key role in maintaining hygiene in the stable.



## Education

BEDMAX is working with schools, colleges and vets to promote best practice in stable management.

## Putting bedding on the welfare map

**Equine veterinary medicine, surgery and technology, farriery, psychology, physiotherapy, stable management, equipment, training, teaching... in every area we are discovering more all the time about how to improve the way we care for our horses.**

In our own field, we hope that BEDMAX has been part of this continuous process. We began making BEDMAX shavings specifically for horses when leading equine professionals recognised that bedding is a principal source of the airborne dust that affects so many horses in stables. The damage that dust can do to the equine respiratory system is now much more widely understood, and a very large proportion of our customers tell us this is the main reason they choose BEDMAX shavings.

Eliminating dust is still our top priority in making BEDMAX. But there are several other important aspects of equine health and welfare that bedding can affect, including hoofcare, rest, joint damage and ammonia. These may not be so widely recognized by owners, but we have tried to address them in the way we make BEDMAX and the raw material we make it from.

Like anyone who lives and works with horses, we learn something new about them every day – and about how bedding can affect their health and welfare.

We are attending BEVA Congress 2013 to keep in touch with the latest developments in the equine veterinary vanguard, and we welcome your views, comments and feedback. We'd be delighted to see you at the BEDMAX stand, or hear from you afterwards.

**Tim Smalley**, Managing Director, BEDMAX Limited

Shavings made *specially* for Horses



### Survey

## Are more horses spending more time in stables?

During the past 10 years we have surveyed thousands of horse owners in the UK. Among the many things we have learned, there appears to be a trend for more horses to be kept in stabling where access to outside space is limited. More horses are therefore spending more time in their stables.

If this is indeed a growing trend, the onus must be even greater on owners to provide the healthiest possible environment for horses that may spend a large majority of their lives inside.

### Hoofcare

## No hoof, no horse

**It's a cliché, but it's still as true as it was when Xenophon said pretty much the same thing in Greek 2,300 years ago.**

We have been lucky enough more recently to attend demonstrations by world-class farriers such as the British Olympic farrier Haydn Price and remedial shoeing specialist Jim Ferrie. Their advances in gait analysis and the treatment of hoof problems (and their partnership approach with vets and physios) are achieving remarkable results and encouraging farriers to add new techniques and technology to their experience and instinct. However, we also receive feedback from many farriers whose efforts to keep horses sound and shod is made more difficult by the condition of the hooves they deal with.

There appear to be two problems with hooves that bedding can affect:

- **Horses coming out of a wet paddock into a stable with very dry and/or absorbent bedding risk the hooves drying out rapidly and cracking.**
- **Horses standing in bedding that retains ammonia at the surface can suffer potentially serious hoof damage or disease.**

**How bedding can help:** We make BEDMAX shavings large to give resilient support under the hoof and frog. We dry them to a controlled moisture content to help prevent rapid drying and cracking. Our larger shavings also allow urine to drain down from the surface away from hooves, and we believe pine may help keep the bed more hygienic even when urine and faeces are present.



**“It is essential for us to be certain that everything we provide for the horses is of top quality, and we know that with BEDMAX we have no worries.”**

**Hugh Thomas, Director,  
Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials**

Best practice

# Making a proper bed

**There is inevitably a huge variation in horse owners' opinions both on their choice of bedding and how it should be used. In our experience over the past 14 years we have found wide differences in:**

- the depth of bedding, ranging from deep-litter straw to a sprinkling of shavings;
- the area of the stable covered, ranging from the whole floor to a quarter or a third of the area.

(There is a small minority that believes rubber matting is a substitute for bedding.)

In our surveys on this subject, the majority of owners who responded agree with the experts we have consulted, that bedding in a stable should be 6 to 8 inches deep, and should cover the whole floor except the area next to the door. This includes rubber matting floors.

Giving advice on how to make and maintain a BEDMAX bed properly is almost as important a part of our commitment to our customers and their horses as providing the best bedding we can. If it isn't used and maintained properly, BEDMAX cannot perform to full effect in safeguarding the horse's health and welfare or the owner's wealth and peace of mind.



**“We have tried other types of bedding in our clinic but they just haven't stacked up for us like BEDMAX shavings.”**

**Lesley Barwise-Munro BSc, BVM&S, CertEP, MRVCS. Senior Partner, Alnorthumbria Veterinary Group. Former President of the British Equine Veterinary Association**



## Education

# Spreading the equine welfare message

**BEDMAX was begun and is still run by people with horses in their DNA. We know that bedding is not rocket science, but we believe that it can play a significant part in good stable management. We are passionate about spreading the message that good bedding, properly used, really can make a difference.**

We offer educational support to Schools, Colleges and Further Education establishments, and we welcome opportunities to support and take part in training and education initiatives with professional equestrian organisations and veterinary practices.

If you are interested in discussing this, please contact us at: [info@bedmax.co.uk](mailto:info@bedmax.co.uk)

## Rest

# Sleeping in stables

A surprising number of people believe that horses can get all the rest they need standing up. We have read reports from the US of a growing number of cases that were initially considered to be neurological disorders subsequently being diagnosed as the effects of sleep deprivation or exhaustion. Many of these cases appear to involve competition horses required to spend long periods in strange stables.

There are legions of reasons why horses may not feel relaxed or confident enough to lie down in a stable and achieve the REM sleep they need, but the quality of the bed must be one of them. It has always been our view that a good quality bed, made in the correct way and to the correct depth, is an essential part of the stable environment for a healthy, relaxed and well-rested horse.



**“It's the best bedding currently available. We wouldn't use anything else.”**

**David Pearce, Head Groom, The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, Edinburgh**

# Science underlines hygienic benefits of pine

Hygiene is clearly a critical factor in safeguarding a horse's health in the stable, and bedding is central to the management of urine and faeces – the perfect breeding ground for harmful bacteria and fungi.

In the days of the working horse, it was common practice for grooms to sprinkle pine shavings on the floor of a stable after cleaning. We have always believed that making BEDMAX shavings from fresh pine timber gives them an anti-bacterial edge, and over the last decade scientists have identified the oleoresins and the hygroscopic action that proved the old grooms knew what they were doing.

At least one scientific report published in Germany in 2005 has also demonstrated that pine is unique amongst wood species in its antibacterial effect on at least one of the bacteria whose harmful strains are most likely to compromise hygiene in stables.

The study by scientists at the Federal Biological Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry (BBA) in Germany tested pine boards, shavings and sawdust against several other species including spruce – the softwood most widely used to make shavings and other wood beddings.

The study's findings concluded:

“ Wood of different tree species was inoculated with *Escherichia coli* pLE639 and *Enterococcus faecium* as hygienically relevant test bacteria.

Only pine wood was able to regain its initial hygienic status after germ infestation, within a few hours, so that the wood was germ-free at the surface and within. Pine wood possesses clear hygienic advantages compared to other woods... ”



## Farmers who lamb on BEDMAX report reduced lamb losses

Farmers using BEDMAX shavings instead of straw in their lambing pens in recent years report significant reductions in the loss of lambs to infection, and particularly *E.coli* infection. This correlates with the findings of the BBA study (above) that pine kills *E.coli* bacteria completely and prevents its regeneration.



## Could pine shavings mitigate ammonia risks in stables?

Recent veterinary research has substantiated the traditional concern over the effects of ammonia on stabled horses. Ammonia has been shown to cause or exacerbate respiratory problems – and it is also known to attack the molecular structure of hooves.

With growing scientific evidence of pine's unique antibacterial properties, we are looking for a means of confirming whether pine may have a similar effect on the bacteria that convert urea into ammonia as it does on *E.coli*.

Feedback from owners has consistently suggested that the smell of ammonia is much less noticeable in a stable where BEDMAX shavings are being used. It would be reassuring to know that in this respect, too, BEDMAX is helping to make the stable a healthier place for horses and humans.

**If you would like to talk to us about any subject in this newsletter, please contact us. We would be delighted to hear from you. 01668 213467 email: [info@bedmax.co.uk](mailto:info@bedmax.co.uk)**