



# WISCONSIN STATE HORSE COUNCIL, INC.

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*A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF HORSES AND HORSEMEN IN WISCONSIN*

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **MILLS FLEET FARM AND WISCONSIN STATE HORSE COUNCIL TEAM UP FOR WI FARM TECHNOLOGY DAYS**

**COLUMBUS** – People who enjoy horses will have even more reason to attend this year's Wisconsin Farm Technology Days, as the Wisconsin State Horse Council teams with Mills Fleet Farm to offer more equine programming.

Farm Technology Days, the state's "Premier Agricultural Technology Exposition," is set for Sept. 18-20 at Plain View Stock Farm, Inc., near Albany in Green County. The annual three-day event showcases the latest improvements in agriculture.

Mills Fleet Farm has been involved with Farm Technology Days for 20 years, and this is the third year the company has presented expanded displays and offerings, said Mark Stelzl, merchandising manager for the farm and pet categories for all 30 Mills Fleet Farm stores.

"Three years ago we celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Farm Technology Days was held in Loyal that year. Our first store opened in Marshfield, just 10 miles away, and we decided to do more at that year's Farm Technology Days to help celebrate the anniversary," he said. "It was so well received that in a cooperative effort with the event organizers we decided to continue our expanded display."

One of the goals is to encourage people from all walks of life to attend the event.

"A lot of the non-traditional farmers have never been involved with Farm Technology Days," Stelzl said. "We've brought in horse trainers, mutton bustin' and other events to encourage people to attend, so they can see the changes in agriculture and see how ag is a part of our lives."

The horse-training demonstrations and exhibitions by Priefert's hitch have been very welcome, he said. Several people have said it was the horse-related attractions that drew them to Farm Technology Days, and they were surprised at the size and price of ag equipment they saw on their way to the Mills Fleet Farm display area.

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Last year the Wisconsin State Horse Council's booth was on the opposite side of the Farm Technology Grounds.

"We approached the Wisconsin State Horse Council and asked them to partner with us at the show," Stelzl said. "They decided to join us this year. Mills Fleet farm has the round pen and the sound system. It makes sense to share facilities and have one central location for the horse people to go to. We wanted to keep our round pen busy and it was a natural for us to work together."

Mills Fleet Farm will again host Priefert's six-horse Percheron draft horse team and "Radar," the 2006 Guinness Book of World Records "World's Tallest Living Horse." The Priefert hitch, nicknamed "Texas Thunder," travels from home base in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, to attend Farm Technology Days and other major agricultural events.

Sept. 18, Mary Hamilton will be the featured presenter, discussing "Your horse is spooked easily. What do I do?"

Hamilton is a fully insured ARICP certified Level 3 mounted police riding instructor through the American Riding Instructors Association. She has presented at the American Riding Instructor Convention, Minnesota Horse Expo, the Lamar Dixon Expo Center in Louisiana, Michigan State University, and other locations. Hamilton has also served as a horse show judge at the Michigan State Fair in Detroit for the past three years.

Her work has been featured in horse publications. She writes for Horse'n Around, Southeast Equine Magazine, Trail Rider, and The Journal, a publication for police officers.

Josh Lyons will be offering two demonstrations on Sept. 19. He is the son of noted trainer John Lyons and has established a reputation for providing clear instruction and effective help to both horses and riders. He travels internationally, offering clinics and demonstrations.

Sept. 20, Lynn Palm will present two demonstrations. Palm operates riding and training facilities in both Michigan and Florida. She has an impressive record in the Quarter Horse world at both the national and international level. Palm is an accomplished rider in both English and western disciplines, as well as dressage.

The Wisconsin State Horse Council is also lining up a schedule of presenters. Long-time WSHC member Mike McGowan of Black River Falls will detail how he returned to horseback riding after suffering a serious riding accident seven years ago.

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"I got thrown from a horse and seriously hurt, and the first thing I heard people saying was that I was done riding horse," he said.

McGowan, who now uses a wheelchair, refused to accept that idea. As he was recovering from surgery he designed a saddle that would provide him with support and security, developed a system for saddling his horse, and figured out how he could load the horse, equipment and himself into a rig and travel west for rides in the mountains.

His presentation, "What do you mean I can't ride," demonstrates how he was able to continue to ride independently and emphasizes the value of therapeutic riding programs.

Kent Feeds equine specialist Greg Powers will take some of the mystery out of balancing rations for horses in his presentation on the physiology of the equine GI tract, how horses should be fed, and why. Powers has 25 years' experience in the feed business, including more than five years with Kent Feeds. He applies what he's learned with his own herd of more than 20 horses, most of them halter Quarter Horses.

"We'll have other speakers talking about hoof care, selection of equipment for horses, and other horse-related topics," said Gene Tauber, president of the Wisconsin State Horse Council. "Horses are livestock; they're part of Wisconsin agriculture. The Council is proud to be involved with Farm Technology Days."

The event will also feature demonstrations old-time plowing, disking and threshing, incorporating horse and mule teams.

Thousands of people from Wisconsin and surrounding states visit Farm Technology Days each year. More than 600 commercial exhibitors are expected this year. More than 50 commercial vendors are expected in the Mills Fleet Farm area, with experts on hand to answer questions about products and services.

More information on Farm Technology Days is available at [www.greenfarmtech.com](http://www.greenfarmtech.com), [www.fleetfarm.com](http://www.fleetfarm.com), [www.WisconsinStateHorseCouncil.org](http://www.WisconsinStateHorseCouncil.org), and [www.wifarmtechnologydays.com](http://www.wifarmtechnologydays.com).

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