

THE WATERFORD TIMES

5th Edition

October 2012

FOALS!

Our foals continue to be born – we have now had over 90 babies this year, and there are still more on the way! All of our mares foal down in the stables under supervision so that if there are any problems they can get assistance as quickly as possible. As our mares run freely with the stallions out in the paddocks they have to be checked regularly to see if they are nearing their foaling date. When a mare looks like she is heavy in foal she will be brought up to the “steam up” group, which are the heavily pregnant mares that are waiting to foal down. Those that appear to be foaling imminently will be put in the stables at night time so the night guard can check on them and call for help if necessary.



When looking for signs that a mare is going to be foaling soon, there are several clues that you can look for. Signs of foaling will vary from mare to mare however some of the main indicators include starting to “bag up” or “making a bag”, about 2 to 3 weeks prior to foaling. This is when the udder starts to fill with milk, and when the birth is usually less than 48 hours away the udder might start to leak some milk. This is the colostrum, which is the “first milk” and it is very important for the foal to drink this as it contains the antibodies needed to protect the foal from infection-causing pathogens, and ensure it is healthy and strong in the early days of life. If the foal does not receive an adequate amount of colostrum, within a dozen hours of foaling, it is in severe danger of infection. The mare’s udder might also produce a waxy substance on the teats, and we call this “waxing up”. This usually occurs immediately before foaling however in some mares it can occur days before, and some mares do not wax at all! Another sign is the muscles around the tail and pelvis will start to relax hours, or again sometimes days, before labour begins. It is useful to keep a record of your mare’s behaviour prior to foaling, as they often repeat the same behaviour with each foal, so if you know what is normal for each particular mare you can better predict when the foal is going to be born.



Healthy strong Shire foal

ENDURANCE

Last month we told you that we were starting to put together an endurance team, and were going to be taking some horses to endurance rides. On the 20th October we took 2 horses to the Underberg Endurance ride. Waterford Dazzler, a half Arab half Shire X Thoroughbred filly did her first ever 30km ride, after having only been backed by our trainer Monde several weeks earlier. She went beautifully, was quiet and calm and seemed to thoroughly enjoy herself! We also took Skarabee Aziim, an Arab gelding, who completed his first 80km ride in a time of 5 hours 7 minutes. Both horses did the Waterford name proud and we look forward to taking them to more rides in the future!

Spirit of Faith, the Arab gelding featured in our last month's newsletter, has recently been purchased as an endurance prospect by Lauren Louwrens of Amra Arabians. Lauren is a very proud new owner and we wish her all the best with her new steed – we know he is going to be a champion and look forward to letting you know how he performs!



Lauren Louwrens and Spirit of Faith

FEATURED HORSE – CLYDESDALE STALLION, CRACKER



We are going to be featuring a different horse on the farm each month – and this month we kick off with one of our magnificent Clydesdale stallions, Cracker. Cracker was born on the 15th October 1998, so he has just celebrated his 24th birthday! Cracker is one of the older stallions at Waterford, his sire was one of the original herd of Clydesdales, John John and his dam was Peggy. Cracker's son, Cackler, is also currently breeding with his own herd of mares and continuing his father's stunning lines.

About the Clydesdale horse:

The Clydesdale is a breed of draught horse derived from the farm horses of Clydesdale, Scotland, and named after that region. Although originally one of the smaller breeds of draught horses, it is now a tall breed. Often bay in colour, they show significant white markings due to the presence of sabino genetics, a group of white spotting patterns in horses that affect the skin and hair. The breed was originally used for agriculture and haulage, and is still used for draught purposes today.

The breed was developed from Flemish stallions imported to Scotland and crossed with local mares. The first recorded use of the name "Clydesdale" for the breed was in 1826, and by 1830 a system of hiring stallions had begun that resulted in the spread of Clydesdale horses throughout Scotland and into northern England. The first breed registry was formed in 1877. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, thousands of Clydesdales were exported from Scotland and sent throughout the world, including to Australia and New Zealand, where they became known as "the breed that built Australia". However, during World War I population numbers began to decline due to increasing mechanization and war conscription. This decline continued, and by the 1970s, the Rare Breeds Survival Trust considered the breed vulnerable to extinction. Population numbers have increased slightly in the intervening time, but they are still thought to be vulnerable.

[Information courtesy of http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clydesdale_horse]

HORSES FOR SALE

We always have a selection of colts and fillies for sale, details of these can be found on our website www.waterfordfarm.co.za. Here are a couple recent pictures of some of the older draught breed colts that are currently available.



Waterford Liner – Shire X Thoroughbred, DOB 22/11/2010



Waterford Dogder – Paint X Shire colt, DOB 04/11/2011

STAYING CONNECTED

Just a reminder that Waterford has its own Facebook page, that is updated on a regular basis with news and photos from around the farm. Please take a moment to find and 'like' our page and feel free to add photos and comments of your own! The page can be found at

www.facebook.com/WaterfordFarmSA. For any of you who might own Waterford horses please feel free to post photos of them on this page so we can share it in our "Happy Homes" album – we always love to see how our horses fare once they leave us!



Until next month, ***From the Waterford Family***