Ungulate Barn Flooring Session

UNGULATE TAGS 2016

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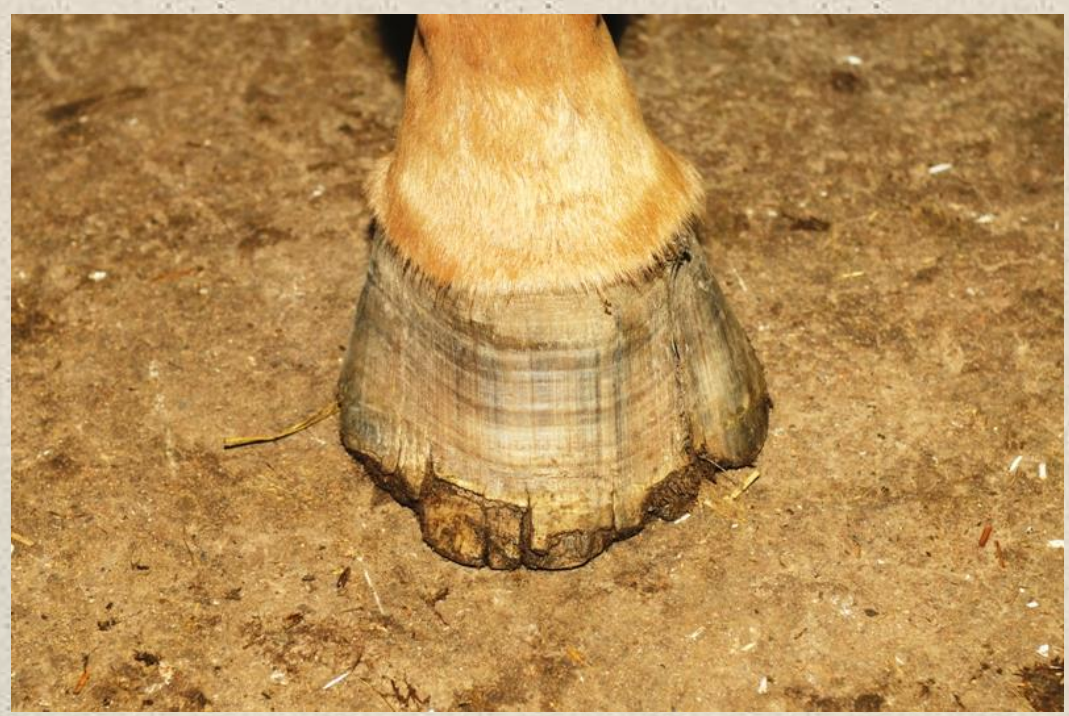
Why do we care?



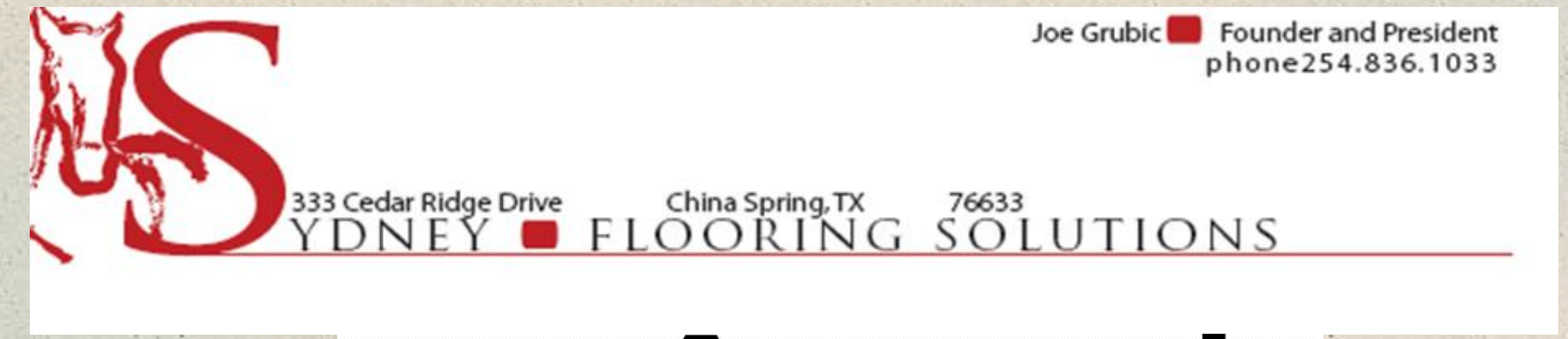
So why do we care about the type of flooring we use? The reason is simple, we work with terrestrial animals… they live with their feet on the ground… they also lay on the ground, eat off the ground… the first contact they have with the outside world after birth is an impact with the ground. The surface on which our animals spend time on effects their physiological and psychological wellbeing. The hoof is greatly effected by the surface it walks on. Badly cared for feet can lead to infections, changes in gait, changes in bone and joint health, can cause acute or chronic pain and overall, effect the good welfare we are trying to provide the animals we care for.

Installed Rubberized Flooring

Spencer Proud

Installed Rubberized Flooring

Joseph Grubic



Lay A Weigh Rubber

Installed Rubberized Flooring

Steve Metzler- San Diego Zoo Safari Park

John Register- Houston Zoo

Tracy Thessing- Cheyenne Mountain Zoo

Guy Lichty- North Carolina Zoo

Adam Felts- Columbus Zoo

Megan Lumpkin- Dallas Zoo

What factors need to be considered when choosing a barn flooring?

The following are answers/questions that were brought up during group topic discussions.

- Cost comparisons
- Climate- Will animals need to be locked in for the winter? Is it humid? Dry? Rain a lot? Does the floor need heating?
- Equipment access to barn (ex. Skid steer will need access for natural substrate flooring)
- Is the species prone to slipping?
- Dust? Can HVAC system handle it? Is there proper ventilation?
- How long are animals on flooring (i.e. are they locked in all night? all winter? just for cleaning?)
- Will parturition take place in barn?
- How much time will it take to clean? Is staffing available?
- What chemicals or tools are needed to clean?
- What is the availability of the substrate?
- Needs of the species- hoof wear? Age? Joint issues? Medical issues?

What factors need to be considered when choosing a barn flooring?

The following are answers/questions that were brought up during group topic discussions.

- Is the barn used for quarantine?
- Drains need to be appropriate for the type of flooring.
- Will the public see? Aesthetics?
- Is the door track system adequate for the chosen substrate?
- What species are going to be housed or have access to flooring?
- What is the long term upkeep/maintenance/replacement period & costs?
- Warranty?
- Can animals be moved out during install?
- Is it going into new or existing facility?
- What do you want the floor to accomplish?
- How do you dispose of used substrates?
- Is there a concern about chemical smells?
- What texture is needed?

What factors need to be considered when choosing a barn flooring?

The following are answers/questions that were brought up during group topic discussions.

- Are their veterinary, staff, animal concerns that need to be addressed?
- What is the life expectancy of the floor?
- How does the floor wear? (discoloration, peeling, etc.?)
- How are the animals fed? Is there concern about compaction (ex. From sand)?
- Can you have multiple stall flooring options in one barn?
- Is there concern about sharp objects on the floor, such as hooves, browse sticks, etc.?