

# FEBRUARY



## Ag in the Classroom Book of the Month



### Thistle's First Hoof Trim By D.H. Anderson

Pesky flies buzz on a hot summer day at Waterdam Farm. At three months old, Lady Thistle still stays close to Polly as she experiences new adventures-some exciting and others frightening!

Today, the vet arrives and instructs the farmhands how to help keep bugs off the horses and out of their eyes. Thistle is nervous, but under the watchful eye of her mother, Polly, she bravely allows the vet to spray her legs and put a special mask over her head. But the lessons are just getting started; another visitor appears on the farm. He has horseshoes, hammers, nippers and nails! Lady Thistle wants to be grown up...but this looks scary! Join the foal as she faces her biggest challenge yet in another *step* toward independence.



### Fun Facts:

- There are more than 74,000 horses in Georgia. The breeding and care of these horses contributes more than \$750 million to the state's economy each year.
- The most common breeds in Georgia are the Quarter Horses, Tennessee Walkers, Paints, American Saddles and Appaloosas.
- In 2023, the U.S. equine industry supported 2.2 million jobs and contributed \$177 billion to the economy, up from \$122 billion in 2017.
- Each year approximately 30 million people in the U.S. ride a horse.
- A horse's hooves grow constantly—about 1/4 inch every month, just like our fingernails—so a specialist called a farrier trims them every 6-8 weeks to keep the horse healthy and happy!
- Horse hooves are made of a tough material called *keratin*—the same thing as our hair and fingernails!
- Foot care is essential for horses because their feet carry all their weight and help them stay strong and healthy.
- All horses need regular hoof care, but not all need horseshoes—many stay healthy with just routine trims to keep their hooves the right length and shape!
- Horses can live 25-30 years. Their eyes are among the largest of any land mammal and are positioned on the sides of the head. This means horses have a range of vision of about 350°.

### Videos:

- [AgVentures: Branch Farms in Rabun County](#)
- Farm Monitor: [Ensuring Proper Winter Diets for Horses](#)
- Farm Monitor: [Clydesdale Horses At Home on North Georgia Farm](#)

### Activities:

- [Horse Coloring Page](#) and [Horse Bookmarks](#)
- [Georgia Dept of Ag, Horses, History and Agriculture Activity Book](#)
- [Easy Jet No Bake Cookies](#)-a treat enjoyed by humans and horses!
- [Horse Mini Ag Mag](#)
- [Horse Activity Page](#)-links to many equine resources
- Posters: Parts of a Horse- [8.5x11](#) [11x17](#) | Horse Tack- [8.5x11](#) [11x17](#)
- [Horse Craft Activity](#)
- [STEM Activity](#): Build a fence to keep your horse on using only clothes pins and tongue depressors/popsicle sticks
- [Equine Bingo: Learn about the different breeds of horses](#)
- [Horse dot to dot- label the body parts then color](#)
- [Farrier Tool Presentation](#)



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