

## **1 HOOF Practitioners may give private SURE FOOT Sessions**

### **Proficiency Standard: Safe Technique**

#### **Requirements for authorization at the 1 HOOF level:**

- 1) Complete the 1 HOOF Application online along with application fee
- 2) Hold a current certificate of liability insurance or the equivalent in the applicant's respective country.
- 3) Register on line for a 2-Day SURE FOOT Workshop.
- 4) Complete the online prerequisite course for becoming a SURE FOOT Practitioner.
- 5) Attend a 2-Day SURE FOOT Workshop with an authorized 4 HOOF Practitioner.
- 6) Have a minimum of 2 different density pairs of SURE FOOT Pads for the case studies.
- 7) Acknowledge, understand and demonstrate recognition of risk involved when working with horses.
- 8) Acknowledge, understand and demonstrate how to stay safe around any horses i.e. best practices for horse handling skills.
- 9) Ability to remain calm and flexible around people and horses.
- 10) Submit six video case studies submitted with case study form
- 11) Complete the online course and quiz following your 2-Day SURE FOOT Workshop\*.
- 12) Approval by a 4 HOOF Practitioner
- 13) Know how to have a good time and keep smiling!!

#### **The following self-evaluation preparedness form is broken up into sections:**

- Safe Environment
- Safe Practices
- Positioning SURE FOOT Pads (SFP)
- Placing Hoof on SFP
- Horse standing and moving off SFP
- Observations on and off SFP
- Working with Horse Owner
- Self-Awareness and Observation
- Stay Present in the Moment

The key points for each section are outlined below. Safety is of primary concern for Horse, Practitioner Applicant and Owner at all times! Observations are the key to success with SURE FOOT.

The first level, 1 HOOF focuses on safe technique, which well-established from the beginning will become good habits whenever working with SURE FOOT. While it may seem that there is a lot of detail at this level, sensing changes in the horse's posture, behavior, movement, including the quality of lifting his hoof are vital to helping the owner understand what you are doing and why you are putting the horse on SURE FOOT Pads.

As you are preparing to attend a SURE FOOT Equine Practitioners Workshop or do your Case Studies, use this document as a check list to evaluate your technique and approach to each horse and owner. You will find you get much more out of a workshop if you have already watched a number of the SURE FOOT Webinars available on the SURE FOOT Equine YouTube Channel. See Addendum B for a listing of suggested webinars including Quick Start Guides.

## 1 HOOF Practitioner Applicant must demonstrate the following for authorization:

1. Choose an appropriate area
2. Demonstrate Safe Practices when using SURE FOOT Pads
3. Positioning SURE FOOT Pads
4. Horse standing and moving off Pads
5. Teaching the owner safe technique
6. Self-Awareness and Observation
7. Stay Present in the Moment

### 1. Choose an appropriate area

- 1.1. Quiet and open. Do not work in a confined space!
- 1.2. Clear away any potentially dangerous objects and people nearby.

**Purpose:** Using SURE FOOT with a horse for the first time can be unpredictable. While many horses appear perfectly calm, they may react to the Pad the first time. Therefore working in an open environment, without obstruction, noise or a lot of activity is best when starting out.

### 2. Demonstrate Safe Practices when using SURE FOOT Pads

- 2.1. One hand on your back to keep your hands away from hoof
- 2.2. One hand holding Pad
- 2.3. Approach while observing horse's response/reaction to Pad
- 2.4. Read horse for suspicious behavior on approach
- 2.5. Stop if horse is concerned
- 2.6. Allow horse to move away
- 2.7. Recognize the difference between flight, fright, freeze, flock, faint and fooling around before proceeding
- 2.8. Offer Pad to horse allowing him see, smell, touch, taste the Pads in hand
- 2.9. Reassure horse, owner and remain calm yourself
- 2.10. Walk horse away from Pad so he can think about his experience
- 2.11. Give horse time to process, look for "okay" signs
- 2.12. Leave horse alone while processing.
- 2.13. Do not interfere with horse's experience with loud talking, moving or touching him
- 2.14. Walk horse off within 2 minutes if he is swaying significantly
- 2.15. Recognize when to walk horse off – LESS is MORE!

**Purpose:** One of the key tenants of SURE FOOT is that we allow the horse to have a choice. Remember that SURE FOOT is not training and that SURE FOOT is never forced upon the horse. He can choose to accept the Pad or not. Reading his behavior upon approach is critical to knowing if the horse is simply tolerating the process or accepting and engaged in it. Therefore, reading the horse's behavior, and when in doubt walking him away or removing the pad to give him a chance to think about it, is key to the success of using SURE FOOT with any horse.

### 3. Positioning SURE FOOT Pads

- 3.1. Work with conscious/casual behavior, self-awareness
- 3.2. Trust but verify that the horse is okay
- 3.3. Drop Pad near hoof (typically a front hoof for the first time)
- 3.4. Wait to allow horse to look, smell, touch, taste Pad on ground
- 3.5. Stroke horse's leg
- 3.6. Attempt to pick up hoof
- 3.7. Pick up a foot and hold it without force!
- 3.8. Kick Pad in place with your foot
- 3.9. Place hoof on Pad

**Purpose:** Sensing and feeling the quality of the horse's leg when you attempt to pick it up can give you a significant amount of information regarding the horse's mental and physical state. Paying keen attention to this detail will guide you as to which SURE FOOT Pad you choose and when to allow the horse to walk away or when you can proceed to using Pads under more hooves.

#### 4. Standing and Moving Off

- 4.1. Movement while on Pad
- 4.2. General observations
- 4.3. Walk off Pad
- 4.4. Walk
- 4.5. Rest
- 4.6. Repeat same hoof

**Purpose:** Many horses lose their balance when they first stand on a SURE FOOT Pad. Allowing them to walk off is simply acknowledging this. Attempting to keep the horse on the pad will only cause anxiety as the horse may feel out of balance. Walking allow the horse time to process the concept and let the brain integrate the information gathered from standing on the Pad. Repeating the same hoof gives the horse a chance to understand what is happening.

#### 5. Teaching the Horse Owner

- 5.1. Have horse owner stand on SURE FOOT Pads to sense and feel differences.
- 5.2. Explain that this is an offer and provides insight into the horse's behavior and actions.
- 5.3. Demonstrate how to place SURE FOOT Pads under the horse's hooves safely.
- 5.4. Point out observations such as breathing changes, licking and chewing, swaying, etc.
- 5.5. Help owner to be a better observer
- 5.6. Gently request that the owner gives the horse space by having owner step out of reach so she can't touch him while he is on the Pads
- 5.7. Let horse owner be involved in placing Pads once you know the horse's reactions.
- 5.8. Encourage owner to be curious without judgment.
- 5.9. Explain why we are giving the horse a choice.
- 5.10. Point out observed patterns without emotion by journaling
- 5.11. Remind owner SURE FOOT is not training – this is an offer the horse may refuse.
- 5.12. Suggest owners join, SURE FOOT and Fans of SURE FOOT Facebook pages
- 5.13. Suggest the owner watch some of the webinars on the YouTube Channel
- 5.14. Based on the horse's choices, suggest owner purchase some Pads

**Purpose:** Engaging the owner in the process will result in a more successful outcome regardless of how the horse responds. When owners learn to observe movement patterns and understand that behavior is affected by balance, they are more understanding to their horse's habits and training issues. The education of the owner will result in more empathy towards the horse in a variety of situations. Suggesting that the owner invest in a pair of Pads to continue working with the horse in between sessions (as important as recommending carrot stretches or pole work) is of benefit by making your work "stick " and giving the owner an opportunity to experience the benefits of SURE FOOT including an improved relationship with her horse in addition to enhanced performance, rehabilitation, calming and greater confidence in both horse and rider.

#### 6. Self-Awareness and Observations, do you:

- 6.1. Demonstrate safe practices
- 6.2. Teach safe practices
- 6.3. Allow the horse time to process
- 6.4. Give the horse rest between offers by standing, walking, and/or increased movement
- 6.5. Point out observations without judgment
- 6.6. Teach owner how to observe
- 6.7. Report journal vs. judgment statements
- 6.8. Avoid stories, stick with the observations

**Purpose:** The best teachers model the behavior they desire in their students. To ensure safety and respect for all concerned and to maximize the benefits for the horse, we have to be the example of "best practices", which will ensure the best outcome for the horse.

## 7. Stay Present in the moment:

- 7.1. Only use your phone for recording the horse through photos and video
- 7.2. Remain calm (Sharon Wilsie's Horse Speak® "zero")
- 7.3. Pay attention to small signs of discomfort
- 7.4. Work without anticipation of results
- 7.5. Do not allow yourself to feel pressured to perform by owner
- 7.6. Allow time and space for horse to process
- 7.7. Look for small changes with curiosity
- 7.8. Know when to stop, by recognizing that the horse has had enough

**Purpose:** The real value of SURE FOOT is being fully present with the horse and owner during the SURE FOOT Session. Showing interest in what is happening before during and after standing on SURE FOOT pads engages the owner to also be curious. Besides SURE FOOT is fun and interesting! Let yourself be immersed in the reactions of the horse so that the owner also sees horses with a new perspective. The horse will only be allowed to change if we engage the owner and your enthusiasm will become infectious!

## Addendum A - Basic observations to be noted during a SURE FOOT Session

There is a lot of information to be gathered during a SURE FOOT Session with any horse. Here are a few general things to pay attention to while working which may help guide you in choosing the SURE FOOT Pads for that individual horse. These are only some of the many things to pay attention to. Please see the "Observation Check List" for more.

### A. Picking up a hoof

- a. Ask and then pause to see the horse's response
- b. Hoof stuck to ground
- c. Leg stiff on lift
- d. Horse stomps hoof down
- e. Pushes leg forward
- f. Pulls leg back
- g. Pulls away from person
- h. Can't let leg down
- i. Steps sideways
- j. Jams hoof down
- k. Steps wide
- l. Immediately removes hoof
- m. Leans away
- n. Leans into Pad
- o. Refuses to stand on Pad

### B. Horse stands on Pad

- a. Walks off
- b. Moves sideways
- c. Moves backwards
- d. Moves pad into better position
- e. Snorts at Pad
- f. Stays on Pad
- g. Rests toe only or stands flat
- h. Pick up hoof to remove Pad

### **C. Observations while on Pad**

- a. Head
- b. Neck
- c. Breathing
- d. Body
- e. Hoof
- f. General attitude
- g. Overall body tone/tension
- h. Ears
- i. Tail
- j. Swaying
- k. Weight bearing

### **D. Horse moving off Pad**

- a. Horse surprised by Pad when stepping off
- b. Horse walks off quietly
- c. Jumps off
- d. Leaps forward
- e. Steps sideways
- f. Steps backward
- g. Does he step off the same way each time?

### **E. Movement afterward**

- a. Fast
- b. Slow
- c. Stops
- d. Wants to return to Pad
- e. Wants to move away from Pads
- f. Change in movement during walk

### **F. During rest between intervals on the Pads**

- a. Does he want to stand away from Pads for a moment to process
- b. Make observations such as:
  - 1. Blinking
  - 2. Licking and chewing
  - 3. Sighing
  - 4. Head height
  - 5. Body changes
  - 6. Grazing
  - 7. Neck lengthening and/or lowering

### **G. On the next interval offering a Pad notice if:**

- a. Hoof harder to pick up
- b. Easier to pick up
- c. Horse moves to position you to another leg
- d. Increased or decreased anxiety
- e. Body observations

## Addendum B - Videos available on YouTube:

### Quick Start Guides

- a. English: [SURE FOOT Equine Stability Program DVD Quick Start Guide 2017](#)
- b. German: [Deutscher SURE FOOT Equine Stability Program Quick Start Guide](#)
- c. Dutch: [Dutch SURE FOOT Videos](#)
- d. French: [Dutch SURE FOOT Videos](#) (Subtitled)

## Addendum C - Definitions

- a. SURE FOOT Session (approximately 1 hour): Practitioner works private with the horse owner to introduce and continue to assist owner in using SURE FOOT with her horse. These are private sessions, not intended to have an audience. The simplest way to think of a session is like a private riding lesson. The session may be unmounted or mounted with the focus on using SURE FOOT to see what changes may occur and to guide the owner in the use of SURE FOOT during and afterward.
- b. SURE FOOT Pad Party (1 – 3 hours): Horse owners bring their horse to find out which SURE FOOT pads their horse might enjoy. Maximum 6 horse with handlers and 10 participants without horses who can participate in the theory portion and human Balance Trail activities.

This is a low-key event. A Pad Party or small group is not a demonstration although people may observe. It is intended for the horse and owner, not the audience. The number of horses in the arena at one time will depend on the space available and the number of SURE FOOT Practitioners present. Typically one to two horses are present so that the Practitioner is able to work with and observe how the horses are responding. Pad Parties may last 1 – 3 hours depending on the number of horses in attendance.

- c. SURE FOOT Demonstration (1 – 2 hours): Practitioner demonstrates the use of the Program and SURE FOOT Pads to an audience. The audience does not participate other than by observation. Typically 1 – 2 hours the Practitioner will use approximately 2 – 4 horses either unmounted or under saddle with the owner or designated handler present in the arena with the horse.
- d. SURE FOOT Clinics (1-2 days): Open to the public clinics are typically two days with unmounted and mounted sessions. Often one horse is used as a demonstration and then two horses are in the arena at a time with a support person (rider or handler). Sessions are approximately 45 min - 1 hour long and auditors are allowed. The benefit of a two-day clinic is to see the changes that occur overnight and continue the process the next day. In some cases SURE FOOT clinics may include riding instruction or evaluation by the SURE FOOT Professional using other techniques provided that is advertised ahead of time.
- e. SURE FOOT Practitioner Workshop (2 days): For equine professionals who wish to learn more about SURE FOOT and incorporate the Program into their work. Two-day workshops are requisite for becoming a SURE FOOT Professional and/or moving up the levels.

*Case studies may be submitted through your YouTube Channel. You will have full control of the content. You may keep the videos as "unlisted" or "private" and delete after they are reviewed. Please share a link to the reviewer once they are posted.*

*\*The online portion for 1 HOOFF needs to be completed after the workshop with a brief Quiz. Applicants will have three opportunities to pass the quiz and need to score 100% to be approved as a 1 HOOFF Practitioner.*