#### Horse Aggression

I have been asked about "Horse Aggression"

This behavior more often displayed by a horses around food and when a human appears it normally signals food, or a treat where the petted horse becomes a little spoilt and starts to lose all respect for those around him or her. Horses are not by nature disrespectful or rude. These things are normally human introduced by not setting boundaries. We do see horses that are stabled in which the horse feels confined in a small space that is also easily defended. The varieties of aggression toward people include fear, pain induced, sexual (hormonal), learnt, and dominance related. Some horses, especially young ones, play with each other while showing signs of aggression such as kicking and biting, although in play to other horses this can be dangerous to people.

The first step in managing horse aggression is identifying the cause, and if possible, removing it with training and positive reinforcement.  To establish positive control over this type of horses you should seek out the help of a professional and they should develop a training program of along counter conditioning. I read somewhere and I agree that dominance-related aggression in horses is different to dog aggression and (also known as dominance aggression) in that it is not context-dependent. Environmental management is important as well; good management should include sufficient resources such as space, food, and water. Some horses are considered to have pathologic dominance aggression; they will attack other horses and people that are near them. These horses should be separated completely from other horse, and treated with extreme care around people.

I don't believe I should write a how to fix the problem on this subject as that would be irresponsible of me or anyone else to do so unless with have seen the horse first.

The important thing is to get help and keep yourself safe!

1.  Separate the horse.

2. Get professional help

3. Don't think and trust desensitisation without a positive reinforcement training method.

4. Keep yourself safe at all times.

5. Get professional help which will benefit you and your horse.

Regards Mike Costello

MFC Equine