

MULE COUTURE

Deb Kidwell, Lake Nowhere Mule and Donkey Farm

All right ladies, this one's for you. I knew that using a high fallutin' word like "couture" would get your attention. Of course, the word is usually associated with fancy French designers, but I want to address "mule couture". Not dressing your mule, but what you ladies wear while caring for your mules.

If you take care of your mule in a farm-like setting like I do, I'm sure that you have found that "fashion sense" goes out the window. Kind of lowers itself to "no sense at all". And, I am the world's worst. Farm life lends itself to some strange outfits. When I lived in south Florida, as a relatively sane person, I dressed accordingly – DKNY, Lauren, Kenneth Cole, etc. Now that I am housekeeping staff to our mares, mules and Jackstock, my tastes fall under the "comfortable and necessary design rules". This basically translates to "none".

I would be happy to give you a few examples; yesterday, while it was raining cats and dogs, I fed and watered wearing light cotton green and white striped pajama bottoms, topped with a pink pajama tank top, an orange and beige flannel shirt and my black muck boots. Heck, I was going to get drenched anyway and who was going to see me? Except for my husband, and he has given up on asking me what the h&#* I am wearing. Then, for winter there are the requisite insulated overalls. Oh my, those things are toasty! I try to color coordinate, but warmth is warmth and I am sure that I look like a color dysfunctional Michelin man, but who cares?

What is up with farm clothing outfitters anyway? Carhart and Walls seem to have forgotten that WOMEN farm. Most of what I buy I get in the boys department at Tractor Supply, the Coop or Rural King. Once, while my hubby was out-of-town, the dogs were raising Cain in the yard. I went to investigate and they had a HUGE snapping turtle surrounded. (At this point in my farming experience, I had not begun to kill varmints, but rest assured, I have no trouble shooting something now!). The turtle was so big that I could not move the thing by myself, so I called a neighbor, Miss Betty, who at the time was 72 years old. It was about 6:00pm and Miss Betty showed up with shovel in hand. Well, it must have been something to see, since Miss Betty showed up in her jammies too!

There we were, two middle-aged women in jammies that didn't match, me with flip flops on and Miss Betty wearing flowered sneakers. She was hitting that turtle on the head and I asked her what she was doing. She told me that she was trying to disorient the thing. With a pitchfork and a

shovel, we finally flipped it over the fence and into the woods. Another job well done, and no witnesses to our fashion faux pas.

Regarding fashion (or lack thereof), you ladies know who you are. It's OK, you can tell us, raise your hand if you have taken your mule to the Vet's in your jammies, because you thought he or she was sick and it was 6:00 o'clock in the morning. I remember reading fashion magazines that had the "Do and Don't" sections, where they showed you pictures of well heeled women as "do's" and then the "don'ts"; people like me that had a black box blocking their faces so you could not identify the fashion offenders. Yep, the fashion police would shoot me on sight now.

Oh, and one other thing...leg hair. Ladies, if your husband or significant other says anything about it, the answer is simple. In the winter it is called "insulation". In the summer, it is called "T.E.W.S.". This is an acronym for a very scientific term referred to as "Tick Early Warning System". Works like a charm.

So, "Mule Couture" is anything that you choose to wear that means taking care of your mules in comfort. You go for it ladies. Ralph Lauren, eat your heart out! 🐾



"Genesis is a fashion "DO" in formal black.
Madame X is a fashion "DON'T"!"