

Feeding Horses

Horse Nutrition and Feeding Management: Feeding Tips for Healthy Horses

Feeding a horse can be very confusing! You will want to feed your horse for optimum growth, performance and health. Consider the amount of energy and protein that is being fed, along with the right mix of vitamins and minerals.

Your horse's requirements for energy, protein mineral and vitamins will change depending on the horse's age, size and workload.

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Feeding and Management Considerations for Horses

In years when drought has existed throughout the province, pastures have become overgrazed and feed prices are high. Drought can affect feeding and management choices for your horse.

This article will outline some pasture management considerations and alternate feed sources. Horses will require more water in a drought situation because of the fibrous and less digestible feed.

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Feeding Considerations for Working and Performance Horses

The horse is an incredible athlete and they must be fed adequately to ensure optimal health and performance.

All horses need energy, protein, minerals, vitamins and water. As the amount of exercise increases for your horse, their nutrient needs also increase.

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Feeding Forages to the Growing Horse

Good quality forage fed in appropriate amounts can supply a large percentage of a horse's daily nutrient requirements.

How you feed your horse hay – either in a feeder or on the ground will make a difference to the cost of feeding.

Creep feeding is generally not an industry accepted feeding practice for suckling foals. Foals that are creep fed 45 days before weaning benefited in a reduction of stress post weaning.

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Feeding the Broodmare

How the broodmare is fed will affect and influence the success of the breeding program, her ability to grow a healthy foal during pregnancy and to produce enough milk for the foal.

The broodmare needs energy, protein calcium and phosphorous in adequate amounts during the different stages of pregnancy and lactation. Broodmares also need the following trace minerals: iodine, copper, zinc and manganese. Vitamins A, D and E are also important.

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Feeding Young Horses for Sound Growth

Raising a foal can be both rewarding and challenging. You've spent a great deal of time researching stallion prospects for breeding, invested money in stallion fees and patiently cared for your mare during her 11-month pregnancy. When the product of your efforts finally hits the ground in the spring, you hope the foal will grow up to be a strong, sound and athletic horse.

Nutrition plays a significant role in producing a strong, sound horse. The foal must receive a diet adequate in energy, protein, vitamins and minerals in order to grow properly and achieve its full genetic potential.

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Body Condition Scoring for Horses

Body condition scoring is a method of evaluating body fat in relationship to muscle, on a scale of 1 to 9. The system works by assessing fat both visually and by palpation in the areas of the loin, ribs, tailhead, withers, neck and shoulders.

Body condition scoring is a helpful management tool that can be used across all of the horse breeds. The actual body condition of a horse can also affect its reproductive capability, performance ability and health.

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