

# Recommended Feeding Program

**We** recommend a basic feeding program which includes:

1. Ensuring roughage is available at all times.
2. Supplementing with Vitamins and Minerals likely to be lacking or imbalanced in the diet.
3. Supplement with minimum amount of concentrates as necessary.

The most critical part of our feeding program is roughage. The horse evolved grazing low quality high quantity roughage (i.e. natural pasture) and this form the basis of our feeding program. When we chew our food our body sends a message to our stomachs to start releasing stomach acid in anticipation of food arriving, horses don't have this response, their stomach releases stomach acid throughout the day and night. This means that horses must have food in their stomach at all times, if they don't the stomach acid will actually start eating away at their stomach lining which causes acidosis and ulcers. Horses also have an inbuilt mechanism that means if they are on poor quality roughage they will eat more to ensure they receive enough energy. What many owners deem to be a high quality pasture can often lead to problems, for example fertilised improved pasture can have a higher sugar content which can lead to laminitis and founder. Ensuring roughage is available at all times keeps the horses gut healthy reduces the chance of acidosis, ulcers and colic.

The second part of our feeding program is supplementing with Vitamins and Minerals. This is where Equilibrium products come in, I would recommend Equilibrium Mineral Mix for most horses (broodmares, stallions, weanlings, yearlings etc), we do have a product called Equilibrium B1

Cool Mix however this is recommended for nervous or excitable horses. If you do have a nervous or excitable horse I would recommend the B1 Cool Mix, remember that you wouldn't have to feed both the Mineral Mix and B1 Cool Mix you only have to feed one product. Both products contain Macro Minerals, Trace Minerals, Vitamins and Electrolytes. The dosage varies according to size and workload. Lactating broodmares, weanlings, yearlings and racehorses in work are recommend the highest dose of 140g (2 scoops) per day. Mares in foal are recommended 1 1/2 scoops (105g) per day and spelling/retired horses are recommended 70g (1 scoop) per day. The increased dosage takes into account the additional demands that growing horses, lactating broodmares and horses in work have on their bodies.

The third part of our feeding program is feeding minimum amount of concentrates. There are two forms of concentrates - energy and protein. Energy concentrates are designed to provide horses with energy for their daily requirements and to store as fat. Horses should derive the majority of their energy from their roughage; feeding concentrates should only be seen to top up their energy requirements. Horses in work, lactating broodmares and older horses typically require energy concentrates. Protein concentrates are designed to provide horses with amino acids, the two amino acids horses require are lysine and methionine. When assessing a horse's condition you need to assess their fat cover and muscling separately - to increase fat cover you need to increase the energy portion of the diet and to increase muscling you need to increase the protein portion of the diet. Unfortunately due to the nature of premixed and pelleted feeds it has a fixed ratio between Vitamins,

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Minerals, Energy and Protein. This means if you feed less than the recommended daily dosage then your horses will be on a reduced rate of vitamins and minerals, it also means that if your horses need more protein but have enough fat cover you cannot separate these two and in order to get more protein you have to feed more energy. We prefer to keep the feeding program in a way that provides flexibility to allow the owner to adjust ratios of energy vs. protein vs. vitamins & minerals. In regard to energy concentrates we tend to recommend Barley or Oats - price varies depending on availability in your area, some areas can get oats much cheaper and other areas barley is much cheaper. Barley can be fed boiled, rolled, steam flaked, micronised or extruded. Oats can be fed cracked or whole oats can be soaked (hot water for at least 10 minutes or cold water overnight) - treating the grain will increase the digestibility. We recommend feeding up to 1kg of energy concentrates per day, exceeding 1 kg per day increases the risk of digestive issues including ulcers, acidosis, colic, tying up, laminitis and founder. In regard to protein concentrates we recommend mixing the feed with lucerne chaff (if they don't receive a hard feed we recommend feeding at least 1 biscuit of shredded lucerne hay per day), for lactating broodmares and growing horses we recommend adding 1 - 2 cups of full fat soya bean meal to their feed. Full Fat Soya bean Meal is a very high quality protein for horses it has good levels of both lysine and methionine.

Our company policy is to provide horse owners with information so that they can make informed choices about how to feed their horses.

Energy (Roughage/Energy Concentrates [Barley or Oats])  
Protein (Lucerne/Full Fat Soya bean Meal)  
Lysine (Lucerne/Full Fat Soya bean Meal)  
Fibre (Roughage)  
Salt (Equilibrium)  
Calcium (Equilibrium)  
Phosphorus (Equilibrium)  
Magnesium (Equilibrium)  
Zinc (Equilibrium)  
Iron (Equilibrium)  
Manganese (Equilibrium)  
Copper (Equilibrium)  
Selenium (Equilibrium)  
Iodine (Equilibrium)  
Cobalt (Equilibrium)  
Vitamin A (Equilibrium)  
Vitamin D3 (Roughage/Sunlight)  
Vitamin E (Equilibrium)  
Vitamin K3 (Sufficient amounts are obtained from roughage sources)  
Vitamin B1 (Equilibrium)  
Vitamin B2 (Sufficient amounts manufactured in a healthy horses gut)  
Vitamin B6 (Sufficient amounts manufactured in a healthy horses gut)  
Vitamin B12 (Sufficient amounts manufactured in a healthy horses gut)  
Biotin (Sufficient amounts manufactured in a healthy horses gut)  
D-Calcium Pantothenate (Sufficient amounts manufactured in a healthy horses gut)  
Folic Acid (Equilibrium)  
Niacin (Sufficient amounts manufactured in a healthy horses gut)

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# Recommended Feeding Program

To summarise this is how you would implement our feeding program in different horses:

## Broodmares in foal

1. Roughage available at ALL times
2. 1 1/2 scoops (105g) of Equilibrium Mineral Mix per day
3. Up to 1kg of Oats OR Barley (most broodmares in foal won't require any energy concentrates). The nutritional demands on broodmares in foal do not increase greatly until the final trimester. To avoid bent legs in foals it is important that broodmares are not over fat, they need enough in reserve to cope with lactating but not too much that it causes problems with the foal, this is a balance that needs to be reached. In the last trimester you can start adding Full Fat Soya bean Meal to the diet to help broodmares keep their muscling; this is not of huge importance however it can help the broodmares (particularly the older mares) cope with the demands of lactating. Mix the feed with lucerne chaff at a ratio of 1 part concentrate to 1 part chaff.

## Broodmares Lactating

1. Roughage available at ALL times
2. 2 scoops (140g) of Equilibrium Mineral Mix
3. Up to 1kg of Oats **OR** Barley (if roughage quality good then sometimes broodmares require very little energy concentrates), 1 - 2 Cups of Full Fat Soya bean Meal, Mix feed with Lucerne Chaff (at least 1 part concentrate to 1 part chaff)

## Growing Horses (Weanlings/Yearlings)

1. Roughage available at ALL times
2. 2 scoops (140g) of Equilibrium Mineral Mix
3. Up to 1kg of Oats OR Barley (most growing horses don't require any energy concentrates when sufficient roughage is provided, ensure that growing horses are not over fat, seeing the glint of the last rib is ideal condition for a young growing horse), 1 - 2 cups of Full Fat Soya bean Meal (inadequate protein supplementation as a young growing horse cannot be made up for later in life, protein is critical for young growing horses), mix feed with Lucerne Chaff. Often studs that don't need to feed energy concentrates to their young stock will mix the Equilibrium with Full Fat Soya bean Meal and put that out in troughs for young stock to eat.

Hopefully the above has provided you with sufficient information, should you require clarification on any of the above points or if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

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