

# NUTRITION: A Done Deal



**B**eing responsible for a live animal is quite a load for one to bear. Therefore, it is necessary to handle such a matter ethically and seriously. Horses, if given a choice, would most likely enjoy serving as vacuum cleaners - inhaling everything in sight. That is mainly one of the causes why us "humans" need to give the proper food in the proper amounts for the "Dirt Devils" to inhale. Stabled horses are what "we" make of them, or more so what "we" feed them to be.

In relation to their godly sizes, horses have very small and simple stomachs, and food passes through several digestive processes before the waste matter is evacuated. With colic acting as one of the most common downfalls of horses, it is deemed necessary to feed your horse a small amount several times a day.

A horse owner's motto should undoubtedly be "healthy horse" and "quality not quantity". Once those mottoes are effective, then your horse can perform well, have a shiny coat, strong hoofs, etc... The types of food that achieve such things are: hay, Bran, Oats, Barely, Wheat, Maize, Peas, Sugar Beet, Chaff, Molasses, Roots, Bran Mash and Linseed. It is understood that the purchase of such food types can be expensive and can, therefore, be the cause of a certain shortage in the nutritional diet. However, there are feeding pellets that contain most if not all the elements mentioned above, in addition, to electrolytes and vitamins supplements. A solution that is seen to be heaven sent, not only does it cost less but it also provides a balanced diet for horses in different activities.

Bran, Oats, Barely, Wheat, and Maize are good source of proteins and carbohydrates which gives energy to the working horse. Peas, Beans, Sugar Beet, Chaff, Roots and Molasses are also a source of proteins, helps mastication of concentrates, and helps in conditioning.

Sugar Beet, if not soaked in water before feeding, may swell in the stomach, thus, causing colic. Bran mash is an excellent laxative and is usually fed the night before a rest day. Linseed is an excellent means of improving condition and the glass to a coat. However, it must be well cooked to destroy the enzymes present, which is poisonous if given raw. Corn, Alfa Alfa, and its fibers are also superb sources for your horse. The science and facts of horses' nutrition are found anywhere and everywhere - do your homework and find out what is best.

In addition to the few elements mentioned, treating your horse to something of its liking breaks its routine and allows the bond between the two of you to solidify. Apples and carrots are popular treats with horses. Take your horse out to the paddock, carry your small basket of treat, and spend "quality" time together. Your horse can eat and be healthy, however, that is only half way to the "healthy horse". Your horse happy and loved is the other half. One can always see it in a horse if it eats well and "feels" healthy and the sensation becomes like one never before felt by man.

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