

newsletter

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B L E N D I N G N A T U R E A N D T E C H N O L O G Y



in this month's issue

1. Pick'n Mix – Managing good and bad does together
2. Feeding horses for optimal vaccine response

PICK 'N MIX- MANAGING GOOD AND BAD DOERS TOGETHER

Managing a mixed group of horses often creates a conundrum for horse owners especially when it comes to feeding.

Keeping horses in a social setting with limitations on the amount of land available makes it tricky to keep a good doer/ easy keeper from gaining excess weight whilst simultaneously improving the condition of the bad doers/hard keepers.

Below are a few tips which may be worth considering:

- Know the weight and condition score of each horse. Any deviations from an average weight or condition score of 5-6 need attention.
- Watch the herd dynamics to get a better understanding of which horses may need more monitoring. Also consider grouping to condition, for instance, graze poor doers together and better doers separately.
- If horses are only out grazing during the day, take the amount of turnout time into consideration and weigh hay accurately to ensure that each horse is getting 1.5% of body weight in roughage per day. Good doers may need to have their roughage reduced to 1-1,25% which means they need less hay, and poor doers may need theirs increased to 1.75-2% per day.
- Consider using different hays - a lower nutritional value grass for the horses in good condition and a grass with higher nutritional value for those needing extra.
- Avoid round bales - they may save time but can lead to extra wastage and some horses may view them as an 'all you can eat' buffet which could be detrimental for overweight horses. Often, well conditioned horses are the most dominant and thus get more access than the horses really needing the extra hay. If there is no alternative to round bales, consider several bales in different areas to ensure that all horses get a chance to eat.
- If alternative turnout cannot be arranged, consider grazing muzzles for those horses needing restricting.
- Concentrates and oils are often needed to provide extra calories but remember that Balancers and Fibre products (hay cubes, beet products etc) make excellent feed choices for those not needing extra feed.
- There is no "one feeds all" concentrate. Feeding one type of concentrate food only is not ideal. In a big yard, each horse will have different needs and one food cannot meet all the individual horses' requirements. Each horse needs to be considered individually.
- Feed concentrates separately. If horses are not coming into their stables for meals, consider creating tie stalls adjacent to the paddock or pasture, where each horse walks into his own stall at feeding time to eat the grain, then walks out when finished. If one horse eats too fast, he may need to be locked in until the other horses are all finished to avoid him gobbling his feed and eating another's.
- Feed by weight not volume - a standard scoop will hold varying measures of different feeds, which can lead to over or under feeding.

Take home message

Horses are all individuals and will all require something different. Feeding one type of food will not work for all and thus grouping horses can be the most beneficial way of ensuring that all are well maintained.

FEEDING HORSES FOR OPTIMAL VACCINE RESPONSE



Vaccination plays a key role in protecting horses against the most prevalent contagious and mosquito-borne diseases. But can you help your horse's immune system respond to such vaccines for ultimate protection against diseases? According to researchers from the US, you can.

Ensuring optimal response to vaccination will provide maximal protection against many preventable diseases, limiting needless horse losses each year.

To demonstrate the importance of nutrition following vaccination, the research group fed horses one of the following diets:

- a pelleted diet meeting just the basic requirements
- a diet providing a higher nutritional value with better quality roughage and feed with better quality ingredients
- a diet high in supplemental fatty acids (from oils)

The diets were fed for approximately 111 days prior to vaccination and response to vaccination was measured.

The key findings were that horses fed at a higher plane of nutrition and diets supplemented with fatty acids had an elevated response to vaccination than horses fed a basic diet.

This research supports the use of omega 3 fatty acids for boosting a horse's response to vaccination as well as aiding with joint diseases, skin conditions (such as rain rot and Culicoides associated problems), aiding with respiratory issues and maximizing reproductive health in mares and stallions.

This study also illustrates the benefit of using better quality brands of feed that maintain horses while supporting immune health as well as general wellbeing.

Article adapted from: <http://www.equinews.com/article/feeding-horses-optimal-vaccine-response>

TESTIMONIALS

Dear Equus

I wanted to send you my thanks and to say that I absolutely love Equus Feeds. The help and support that I have received from Helen Gilfillan has been fantastic.

My competitive dressage horse has gone from having nothing left in the tank for the second test and/or the championship classes, to having enough for all three plus the kur without being impossible to ride on the first day. Our feed of choice is the **Cool 'n Perform 12%** and **All Time Balancer**.

He also needs very little feed, which I am very happy about, as I feel this is better for overall gut health.

Thank you Equus
Mariatha Van Der Merwe



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For an absolutely free consultation with no further obligation contact our professional consultants to schedule a visit to your yard.

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