

HEAD TO HOOF

Take care of your horse's wellbeing with these products designed to keep your horse healthy and happy.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Forage is one of the most important parts of a horse's diet. When grass isn't available, should you choose hay cubes or baled hay? Stephen Duren, M.S., Ph.D., PAS, one of Standlee's equine nutritionists, weighs in.

FORAGE IS CRITICAL

Your horse's digestive system is designed to ferment plant fiber. Whether it's grass or hay, forage should make up the bulk of your horse's diet, Duren says.

ALL ABOUT THE PROCESSING

Grass is the forage form closest to nature, but that's not always feasible.

Many horses can't access year-round grazing due to regional limitations or show schedules.

"That's when we utilize cut forage or pasture," Duren says.

Hay cubes are made from the same hay you see in bales, just chopped and formed into smaller pieces.

"Most hay, before it's made into a cube, is

stored in a bale and then cubed as needed," Duren says. "There are a few operations that actually cube directly out of a field."

NUTRITIONAL CONTENT

Hay is harvested and dried in a field at the proper maturity and moisture, then baled and sometimes processed into cubes.

"From a nutrient standpoint, the cube has the identical nutrient profile as the hay it was made from," Duren says.

It does not, however, make it more digestible, Duren clarifies.

"There's no nutritional advantage from a digestibility standpoint of cubed versus baled hay if made from the same hay."

EASE OF STORAGE

Cubed hay is easy to haul, easy to weight out and creates less waste than baled hay.

"A bucket of cubes is probably more consistent in weight than a flake of hay," Duren says. "It's a convenient way to boost the quality of the forage component of the diet."

CAREFULLY INTRODUCE CUBES

Owners should use caution when introducing cubes, as their high-quality also makes them highly-palatable, Duren says.

"If the horse has never been fed cube forage before, you'll want to make sure you soak or wet it thoroughly to dissolve it, to prevent choking," Duren says.

CONSIDER COST

Cubes are slightly more expensive than baled hay due to the extra processes involved.

"You likely make that up with little waste," Duren says.

YOU DECIDE

Consider the quality and availability of local forage. If you live in an area affected by drought or wildfires, for example, native grasses may be scarce and cubes may be a good option. If one of your horses would benefit from alfalfa in their diet, adding alfalfa cubes may be the best way to incorporate that forage.

Vetericyn Hoof Soak

Vetericyn's new Mobility hoof products tackle common ailments like thrush, seedy toe, white line separation and abscesses. Mobility Hoof Soak is for abscesses and advanced cases of white line separation and thrush. It penetrates deep into the hoof cavity to purge and remove hoof-eating microbes. It is guaranteed to improve hoof condition after just one application. Available in single and two-jar packages.

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adequan.com



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xpertequine.com



The Rancher Pad from 5 Star Equine Products

5 Star pads are made of 100% pure wool, offering the ultimate protection for your horse's back. The wicking ability of wool allows the fibers to remove heat and wick sweat for maximum comfort. The shock-absorbing properties of pure wool protect against pressure points for maximum compression protection. The Rancher pad is 32 inches by 32 inches, 1 1/8 inches thick, and is perfect for ranchers, ropers and long trail rides. Available in black or natural — custom options available. Price: Starts at \$359.95.

5starequineproducts.com



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fencing.bekaert.com/en



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zoetisequine.com/products/dewormers/quest-plus

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equithrive.com



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equinemedsurg.com



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theartofhorse.com



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tcanimalnutrition.com



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